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HOME LIFE IN HOLLAND

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THE DAM, AT AMSTERDAM

FROM THE PAINTING BY G. H. BREITNER

HOME LIFE IN HOLLAND

BY

D. S. MELDRUM

WITH TWENTY-SIX ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO
MY WIFE,

WHOSE NAME OUGHT TO
BE ON THE TITLE-PAGE

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HOME LIFE IN HOLLAND

CHAPTER I

COME AND LET US TALK ABOUT THE WATER

WHEN the stranger hungry for knowledge about Holland seeks it in a Dutch household, sooner or later, and generally at once, he is given a map.

Geographers like Bos and Brinckman, I have found, are familiar names there. Every Dutch boy and girl, whether born a little Calvinist, is born a little hydrographer. The Dutch hours I recall with most pleasure perhaps are those spent in study or labour, when some new-found host, with his charts around him, discoursed upon the physical conditions of his country. "Come and let us talk about the water," is the welcome you know to expect. And the reason is plain. Maps of Holland are the records of the Waterstaat, and the Waterstaat, as some one has said, is *une étude de géographie humaine*.

We cannot help but talk about the water in Holland. Our host, when we ask him about his countrymen, is bound to entertain us with a chart. They cannot know *how* the Dutch live who have not first learned *where* the Dutch live; and for an understanding of that, something like a course of navigation is required. Dutch geography is an adventure upon strange and apparently illimitable seas. The name Waterstaat cannot be translated into

any foreign tongue, for the thing itself exists nowhere out of Holland. Other countries suffer from the invasions of the ocean and the overflow of rivers, but in it only are these dangers constant, and to be averted daily. Sea and rivers, moreover, are outer waters, and it is rather the inner waters of this ironically constituted country which occasion its characteristic works of reclamation and defence. Holland is ill of a dropsy, and only survives by tapping itself. The watery conditions amid which the Dutch live are so urgent and persistent that they are entrusted to a separate department of State under a Minister of the Crown.

Now, these conditions themselves, the local means for making the best and the most of them, and the body which supervises these efforts, are all included in the term *Waterstaat*. The *Waterstaat* is not only the state of the water; it is (so to say) the Clerk of the Water as well.

Its problems are the oldest public questions, its works the most ancient monuments in the country. It is the earliest of the institutions of the Dutch that "something like government among them brought." The powers which are entrusted to it still are those it exercised long before the House of Orange emerged from obscurity, or the Provinces from sharing the fate of the Holy Roman Empire. Its history is written in tomes, the study of which, I confess, does not always bring enlightenment. Yet it is easier to state the facts of this great struggle with water than to see its marks: the facts are common renown; the difficulty is to be persuaded that they are literally true.

"Oh!" I can hear some impatient reader exclaim—"Oh, the old story of water-logged Holland!" And then he ticks off upon his fingers (for which I am greatly obliged to him) the headings under which that story will certainly fall.

That "A.P.," appearing on innumerable water-gauges throughout the country, indicates the old normal flood-level of the Y at Amsterdam (*Amsterdamsch peil*).

That a great part of Holland (38 per cent. of it, to be precise) is at or under, or not more than three feet above, this flood-level.

That the sea, striving to break in (which is a way the sea has everywhere), is held back by dunes—part of a string of dunes stretching from the Pas de Calais to Cape Skagen.

That where these natural dikes have broken down, artificial dikes have been built (of stupendous strength and at fabulous cost: see all the reference books).

That in Holland (as elsewhere) rivers running higher than the surrounding meadows are indiked.

That besides these invasions, which threaten most countries, and on occasion have been hurled against most, there are inner waters which menace Holland; and these meres and pools, and dug-out peat beds, set the Dutch Waterstaat characteristic and unique problems.

Likewise, and as a consequence, that all Holland, or nearly, is a polder, trenched and diked against water; with deeper impolderings (*droogmakeryen*) within it, and others (*indykingen*) on its fringes, without the dikes.

That Dutch meadows are mapped out in a network of *slooten*—those ditches whose whirlings strain the eye as the train flashes through them. That Dutch towns are ringed with canals—*allemachtig!* how they smell. That Amsterdam is built upon piles, and that even so the houses rock, as their leaning gables show. That (so, at least, they say) all this has marvellously influenced the character of the Dutch; and as for the character of Holland—does not the reader know his Andrew Marvell? In a word, have we not all been informed about it all, a score of times before!

Well, I wonder.

It is quite true, for example, that would you build a house in Amsterdam to-day, the authorities will compel you to found it upon piles. (If ever you have trodden the quaking soil of the *Pyp*, that new, ugly, bewilderingly artistically-named quarter which has sprung up on the site of the "little gardens," behind the Rijks Museum, only the assurance of piles well-driven will give you peace in your bed there o' nights.) But, as I only learned the other day, all that old Amsterdam of which we are thinking was not so built, in spite of Erasmus' saying; and those quaint, charming gables of apple-red, which we have in our mind's eye, do not lean over by accident, but were designed and fashioned as they are by the artifice of builder and brickmaker, to throw off the rain, and perhaps also, I have heard it suggested, in order that their burgher owners might the more easily hoist their goods to the attic-windows, six storeys up.

It is possible, again, that the common knowledge of A.P. does not exhaust all its interest. Dating from centuries back, in its latest refinement it has been adopted throughout Europe; for the Normal Nul is only the New or Normal *Amsterdamsch peil* (the "N.A.P." which is beginning to appear in Dutch ditches). Yet, as the searcher for smaller significances notes, Delfland kept its own *peil* after the Rynland had adopted the A.P., and an R.P. still regulates the water-works of Rotterdam. It would be no surprise to learn that Utrecht or Zeeland has a gauge of its own.

So that the story of water-logged Holland, often told, will still bear some revision and amplification. If there was a time when I thought I knew it all, every day I have spent in the country since has revealed a fresh miracle. I am contemplating the latest

of them now, as I revise these pages, among rich clay-lands close by the Avenue of Middelharnis, Hobbema's "laan," where a map before me of a hundred years ago indicates only an arm of the sea between the severed islands of Goeree and Flakkee. Even were the plot no more complicated than my impatient reader has sketched it, one must peruse it again and again in the country itself to realise all its scenes, and know all its characters, and get a sense of the intensity and prevalence of its incidents.

Contemplate the locks cut daringly through the protecting sandhills for the harbour of Ymuiden. Go to Schoorl, and learn how pines are enticed to compact the exposed and inconsistent dune. See how its shifting mass and the receding shore are strengthened in Delfland or at Vlieland, by concrete piers; examine the "shore heads" on the Zeeland islands, and the piles of baton, literally "riveted through the centre," of the dike-face on Schouwen.

Sail up the normalised rivers, and mark how the outer marches (shall we call them?), the accretions outside the dike, grow or fade away with the windings of the stream. Or, on a Frisian mere, laying your yacht over flush with the meadows, realise that that glowing polder was once like this flood. Or again, leaping the ditches on the uttermost quaking fringe of Groningen, hear within how few generations the rye-fields inside the dikes were reclaimed out of similar mud-pools.

The other day I was walking with the farmer on the Lek Dike. His talk was of his cheese contract, and the nice price he was getting for his porkers, and the precise admixture of Yorkshire and Prussian with the local strain in his breed of them; but still more it ran on wells and *doorbraken* ("breakings through"), and the coming election of dike magistrates. He turned a proudful eye upon the

fat marches outside the dike, which gave the best feeding for his cows; though he smiled his conservative disdain of the idea that the river so laboriously pumped out of his meadows might be as carefully pumped into them again for a season, to fructify them afresh.

Did I see that chimney-stalk on the other side?

"That mill cost the State a hundred thousand guilders, and only worked once last year," he tells me.

I quoted him afterwards on the same spot to the squire, who (and not the farmer) contributes to the cost of that single annual tune.

"And well worth it," he answered. And he pointed towards where the beautiful profile of Ameide is delicately outlined on the sky.

"Two winters ago, not a severe winter either, the ice damned the river there. We had an anxious week. From here," pointing northwards, "is flat as a *flensje* (that is, a pancake) to Amsterdam."

Is it possible that Amsterdam, many miles away, though on dark nights on the dike I can see its lights reflected in the sky, is ever really endangered by this flood, peacefully confined now within summer limits? The countryside stories answer me.—

Imagine the river flowing between the winter dikes, and icebound at that level. The wind changes a point to the south. The ice melts, and melting first of all in the upper waters comes down in enormous blocks, high as the barn, sliding one over the other, lump upon lump mounting to the dike.

What if it pierces it, as ice has pierced dikes often before? Answer that, and understand what it means that the river runs high outside the dike, and that all within it lies flat as a pancake to the capital.

The countryside is out, watching the weak or exposed spots. The worldly possessions, if not the lives of

all, depend on these withstanding the shock. The dike count issues his orders as if the polder were in a state of siege and he its governor. A simple country gentleman, maybe, plain like any town councillor, he is armed by the Constitution with powers entrusted to no other pacific official in the world. He directs his officers to occupy any position or to impound any property that they think needful. Threatened dike-slopes are temporarily heightened by planks, and the space between them filled up with whatever comes to hand. Polder-proprietors supply labourers as in feudal days overlords supplied soldiers. The dike count can impress any man for the work. Carts, wagons, brick, manure, wood, anything useful, can be appropriated without by-your-leave or more than the understanding that their value will be refunded. Even houses are demolished to supply stop-gap material.

The imagination likes to stimulate itself with such sensational aspects of the Waterstaat, but it is rather in its customary routine that we best realise how it can affect the daily fortunes and interpenetrate the character and constitution of the Hollander.

I remember experiencing this conviction most vividly.

We had driven off the meadows on the river-clay, and on to those of the low fen, interspersed with meres. Our road ran round a new polder—a polder within a polder, one of those inner waters of which the Haarlem Mere is the example on the greatest scale. There was the customary encircling canal, filled with black waters which newer and more powerful engines were thought necessary to pump out and over the dike and away into who knows what reservoir or *boezem* in the *waterschap's* ramifications. There, inside it, were farms and gardens, and the early and delicate fruits of an intensive cultivation, and lusty cattle on sunny meadows—all where within living memory we could have sailed our boat as

we can sail it still on the mere just over the polder dikes.

And then, at the heart of the polder, its owner entertained us with an account of the exigencies of *droogmakèryen*, or "making-dry." At his words we saw the muddy swamp—a quagmire of hopes, too—drained and sweetened in the sun. Horses shod with planks ploughed the shrinking and quaking soil. Colza appeared, and again colza; and then, by and by, there were meadows. But meanwhile a fortune has composted the fields, and another flows away with the water which the mill keeps pumping out. There are checks and conflictions. The interests involved in polder government are as numerous and intricate as its off-waterings. It takes a lifetime sometimes to compose them. They become the question of the countryside, and, to settle it, High-Mightinesses descend into the polder from some distant official sphere, with suggestions or commands unwelcomed by the dismayed owner. I hear it all told, with natural bitterness at the recollection of the difficulties, and elation over the smiling issue. It is a man's story of his life we have been listening to.

In the highland East you have still no difficulty in finding water, and in the lowlands you cannot escape it—unless it be in the bathrooms of both. It explains Dutch landscape, and particularly the strangeness which is the chief element in its beauty; and as it affects the natural appearances of Holland, so it has affected her art. By obvious and sensational effects, it imposes itself upon the minds of her people; and it has now subtly fashioned their character by enabling them to add to their territory, not from without, but from within their own borders, setting the national lesson of independence.

For water is at once their enemy and their friend. It gives (or nearly) as much as it takes. As an



WATER MILLS ON THE NORTH HOLLAND CANAL SYSTEM

enemy it would devastate their soil so that the support of society upon it would be impossible; as a friend it sweetens and fattens that soil, to nourish in comfort almost the thickest population in Europe. It is the element that has shut the Dutchman in, keeping him close as an oyster in his polder-shell; and it is the element which has borne him out into the world, an equal among great colonisers. Though he build Dreadnoughts and erect fortresses, he still looks to it for his defence. It is paradoxical, but true, to say that the fluid condition of Holland is the explanation of its fixity in the old ways, and of its continuity also. Its conservatism is rooted in its mutability.

The Waterstaat is the key to Dutch temper and Dutch temperament. It explains the Hollander's sedentary habit of body and his concentration (rather than agility) of mind. Water bleaches his complexion and sets the fashion of his clothes. It determines his agriculture, and is the architect of his towns. It provides him with his sports, and scourges him with the fever which shatters the national nerves. It has taught him orderliness, and made him a genius at small mechanical contrivances—though I admit they do not always work. It seems to account for everything about him, from the shape of his Scheveningen boms, beloved of Mr. Mesdag, to his attitude towards life derived (though he would probably deny it) from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

The stranger in Holland may be wearied by its eternal flatness, its dikes, its dull, grey sheen, its interminable meadows and canals. But let him come by some understanding of their significance, and what at first bores soon begins to interest, and ends by fascinating. Thus it happens that every student of Holland is given a map, and that every writer on Holland strives at once

to convey to his readers his sense of this marvel of water. And I think that M. Mirbeau has done it best, in a figure that at first indeed appears singularly inappropriate: "*On la voit,*" he says, "*on la voit sourdre sous les nappes de verdure, comme, sous la couche de cendres qui le recouvre, on voit sourdre la rougeur d'un brasier.*"

In Holland, water is as intense, as vivid, as fire.

CHAPTER II

DUTCH INTERIORS

WE will now go indoors.

I suppose no society was ever so exhibited in its entirety as that of Holland by her painters in the seventeenth century ; and with a very special particularity they represented the houses of their time. These, in consequence, we know, in and out, from cellar to top-most attic. They were high and narrow, with decorated window cornices and arches ; and most had crow-stepped gables, facing the street or canal, often surmounted by vases and statues. Frequently set into these gables, and displaying a high standard of craftsmanship, were the arms of the dweller, or some sculptured figure or device by which the house was popularly known ; so that the occupant was called, not by his own name, but by that of his dwelling, as Dutch farmers to-day still are by that of their farms.

The principal room was the *voorhuis* (the front-house), which in many cases was led to directly from the door on the street. It was the reception-room ; in great houses very spacious, and decorated with tapestries, arms, and the trophies of the chase ; and in the burgher-houses, where it served as a living-room also, it had tiled or whitened walls, and sand-strewn brick floors. The spinning and knitting, the household work and the nursery duties, were all performed here by the citizens,

when they did not issue for the purpose upon the open verandas on the street, or under the *luifels* (an older fashion), where often, too, the master of the house had his workshop.

In these burgher front-houses the rafters as a rule were left open. The broad, deep mantelpiece was undecorated by the ware and lacquer of the larger mansions, and there were no pots or vases in the open hearth where, in winter, wood and peat were burned. But there were almost always pictures on the walls, as Evelyn and others remarked. The French traveller Sorbieri spoke of "*l'excessive curiosité pour les peintures.*" Pictures were regarded as furniture, and were found in every room, even the attic, and even in the peasants' cottages, though there no doubt they were as cheap and nasty as often now they are cheap and pious.

The kitchen and some rooms behind (including possibly the master's office, or *comptoorke*, used also by the lady of the house, careful of her living-room) led off the narrow hall (*gang*), which ran from the front-house to the courtyard (*hofje* or *binnenplaats*), that most characteristic feature of the seventeenth-century Dutch house. Behind these back rooms (forming the *achterhuis*) was the garden (*tuin*), the formal adjunct of greenery and open air without which no Dutch dwelling was then complete.

The stair to the second storey issued from the front-house or perhaps from the kitchen; and traps and ladders from the bedrooms above led aloft duly to the uppermost attic or *zolder*. The bedrooms were often laid with Spanish matting—there were no carpets in those days; and besides the beds and the ordinary bedroom furniture, contained the coffers and cupboards and cabinets in which the housewife kept her treasures of linen and sometimes ware, all of which, both chests

and contents, are not to be shamed by perfunctory attempts at description.

How far, now that we have stepped within a modern one, do we find repeated around us this seventeenth-century house?

In some cases we are actually within the old shells, very little changed in their outward appearances, or even in the general plan of their interiors. All over Holland still are to be found survivals of the houses, of varying estate, yet singularly true to a common type, which we have been recalling from the pictures of the past.

One of them in Leyden, which I select only because it must have attracted the attention of many strangers, exemplifies the Dutchman's love of emblem in naming his house. An old and partially destroyed gable at the end of the Breestraat has inscribed on it "Who can live unenvied?" To that question answer is made by a crab; which points the moral that only those who are back-going can expect to lead the unenvied life. That the crab should be golden is not uncharacteristic: the "golden scales," the "golden beaker," the "golden heart," are met with at every turn by the twentieth as by the seventeenth or eighteenth century traveller.

The Hollander still displays this naïveté in the expression of his feelings, though almost always too he exhibits a curious, deep reserve, thinking more than he says (though he can be frank enough) as we often discover by the lightning illumination of a remark blurted out in passion. See how he expresses his ideal in naming his house to-day, showing exactly how much, chiefly of comfort, it means for him. His are not the regrets of an exile, such as carry our own suburban householder back with some longing to his childhood, when he names one house of a row in a Brixton or Stoke Newington street "Tiverton," "Dunkeld," "Killie-

crankie." The Dutchman will be comfortable without a pang in his *Lust en Rust* (*Rust* is a great word in Holland), *Buiten Zorg* ("Without Care"), *Myn Genoegen* ("My Joy"), or some ascription (as Holcroft said, noting the same custom a hundred years ago) that might characterise the Vale of Tempe or the Garden of Eden. I dare say it is largely because it was the custom a hundred years ago that he follows it now. Yet he can vary it to suit the circumstance. I have found him in a London suburb at the address not known in Holland,—*Twist Niet* ("Do not quarrel!"), a tribute maybe to the more strenuous air of England.

Indoors also one is sometimes curiously reminded of the house of two or three hundred years ago. I can remember two cases at least where this is so.

The first, in an ancient town, is the width of the front room and the vestibule upon which one enters from the street; flanked on both sides by other houses, from which very thick walls separate it. From the vestibule the narrower *gang*, floored with marble, and the walls whitewashed, runs through its whole depth to the garden; past a bedroom, the inner courtyard, the kitchen, and another public room, with a door into each. The front room (*voorkamer*), which has windows on the street, and the bedroom behind, which looks out into the courtyard, compose the "front-house" of old. The old "back-house" is represented now in the kitchen (looking and giving upon the courtyard) and the parlour (*huiskamer*) behind. There are windows as well as the door in the *gang* towards the courtyard.

Access to the second storey is gained by a stair between kitchen and parlour. This storey and another above it contain bedrooms; and higher up is the attic (*zolder*), itself surmounted by still another, the *vliering*. These double garrets, often spacious and massive, are

reminders of the days when the merchant citizens stored their goods in their houses. There is a room in many town dwellings known as the *opkamer*, because you ascend to it by one or two steps. The construction is explained when you remember that the *opkamer* in the farmhouses, the "best" room, seldom or never entered or used, is raised a few steps, because situated above the milk cellar.

The *voorkamer* is the reception-room; the *huiskamer* is the real living-room and (in the absence of a separate *eetkamer*) the dining-room as well.

This is a type of hundreds of houses in Holland to-day, old, of course, and found chiefly in the older towns.

The second house I am thinking of is more ancient, much larger, and therefore particular. It is, in fact, the old town house of a great family, and dates back to the sixteenth century. To adapt it to the use of two families, the ancient cellars and turrets have been closed up; but the ground floor, which alone I know, preserves the model described above, with a *gang* running from street-door to garden, past the *voorkamer*, an alcove, a bedroom, an enormous *zaal*, a passage leading to kitchens at the side and another bedroom beyond. What a time we had to wait, listening to the approaching footsteps of old Doortje, pattering down that long hall, before she gave us entrance! In the *salle* was a four-poster, curtained with yellow damask, which looked, I remember, like a tent in a desert. And on the curtains, where you must handle them to part them in getting in and out of bed, the careful housekeeper, I remember also, had sewn a strip of crochet.

The likeness in general plan of present-day houses to those of the Little Masters need not be pressed too far. How the comparatively new house, with its *voor-*

kamer and *huiskamer* en suite, its hall still faithful to whitewash if not to marble, its little consulting-room (*spreekkamer*) which might be a *comptoorke*, the loftiness of its living-rooms, to which (on a narrow site) are sacrificed ease and elegance in the staircases,—how far this has been developed from the old model, and the evolution does not seem difficult to trace, is less to our purpose than the fact that it is the uniform type throughout Holland now. Granted difference of scale, all Holland, all middle-class Holland, at any rate, is lodged much in the same manner; though probably it is rather the limited range of estate in Holland that calls for remark.

Even in the so-called *bovenhuis*, built into endless dreary blocks in the cities, the straitness and precipitousness of whose stairs (with ropes for opening the street doors from above, and draw-baskets by which to send up your wares or calling-cards from below) would make life intolerable to an English household, the model is followed as far as may be. This *bovenhuis*, above a shop, or above another dwelling, or *benedenhuis* (in which case the two dovetail in the restricted space with the ingenuity of a Chinese puzzle), is the nearest approach in Holland to our flat, and is occupied by families of all conditions. A bachelor acquaintance of mine in one of the large cities pays for his *bovenhuis* over a shop the same rent as another in London is charged for his small flat in Piccadilly.

The high price of land and heavy communal taxes explain, no doubt, the constancy to this type of town house, which contrasts with the vagaries in taste, of the owners or their architects, displayed in the most modern country villas. Many of these, large and sumptuous, frequently “Art-y” and frequently not very beautiful, are the homes of the city class for whom the name of “Forenzen” has been coined. As early as the

seventeenth century, long before *op centen* or surcharges on taxes were invented, the Dutch began to build themselves comfortable retreats for the *villegiature*. Some of these, *buitenplaatsen*, as they were called, remain,—square, a little formal, with spacious rooms, yet with a careless overflow into surrounding gardens, on the Vecht and the waterings of the Rhine. Like the chateaux of the Eastern provinces, the moated mansions of Overijssel, for example, with their ample provision for the reception of guests in an isolated countryside, they sometimes discover recesses and passages and porches and other relics of a more ancient construction.

The uniformity in the plan of Dutch houses, to which I have referred, is noticeable in their furnishing also. Though that is more mobile at the direction of the occupant's taste, there are many conditions still tending to conserve it in the old fashion. The increased expenditure on furniture, it is true, is one of the signs of the present times remarked by Dutch economists and statisticians; but how constant, until recently, were Dutch households, and how constant are the majority of them even now, to the inherited furnishings and treasures, among which the parent doves ensconced themselves when first they made their nests!

Some of these nests are imposing edifices, some are tiny structures. Some are built out in the open, others against the grey faces of the towns. From among them there has been left on my memory a composite impression of the Dutch middle-class house, which I propose that we explore now, in a leisurely manner, passing from one phase of it to another, in a search for the essence of the whole.

Perhaps there is a stoep. The stoep is not only the single or double flight of steps leading to the landing outside the front door, but also the strip of street flanking the house, usually raised a step or two, of blue granite,

or railed off with granite posts and an iron bar or chain. That is why, especially on the older grachts and streets, one has so much difficulty in finding and keeping to a pavement. *Op de stoepen te loopen*—to jump in and out of the stoeps in front of the windows—is a temptation against which well-bred Dutch children are admonished. I can remember, nevertheless, how some of them, as well as the raggamuffins in one town used to invade that of a cantankerous old lady, who kept her groom with a whip behind her door ready to chase them off.

In place of a pavement a narrow strip of yellow bricks—the *kleine steentjes*, the “small stones”—is found running along the level of the street, and this, when walking with a lady, you always reserve for her. The natives keep naturally to the “small stones” (though these are not sacred from hand-carts or any vehicle: what part of a Dutch street is?), and they tell me they can generally determine the foreigner by his betaking himself to the crown of the caus’ay in his irate impatience of the inequalities of the stoeps. In earlier times the citizen was fined if he failed to preserve in cleanliness the street, quay, and even the bridge in front of his stoep; so that for hundreds of years, night and morning, there have no doubt been in progress those purifying activities which still entertain foreign eyes in Dutch thoroughfares.

The leisure that was passed on the stoep (where occasionally still a bench or garden-seat is placed invitingly) is now enjoyed under the verandas, which cling to the houses on whatever wall they can, after the manner of the Indies, whence, like their name, they come. To that extent, life, at least in the towns, is lived less in the view of the neighbours. In the country, however, and in summer, only the lattice of the verandas screens some of its intimate hours from the public gaze,—the family

reunion at the after-dinner tea-drinking, for example,—the tea-lights (*thee-lichtjes*) star the countryside like glow-worms in the summer twilight—or the little gathering of friends invited to a “bowl.”

This “bowl” is simple cup of Rhine wine, flavoured with woodruff—here called “straw from the bed of Our Lady”—and sociably poured and shared round the table in the open air. Perhaps a *ben* or basket of fruit has arrived as a present from a Betuwe orchard, and a youthful company summoned to a feast agree to “eat for the last cherry.” In this diversion you eat cherry by cherry in turn from the heaped-up dish, the penalty for having the last one fall to your share being the cost of some little treat,—a cycling-party tea at an inn in the woods or dune fringes, or a run down the canal in your motor yacht. Such are the simple, homely pleasures that variegate life in Holland.

Under the stoep in an old town house such as I am imagining, a door gives entrance to a half-basement. Here is the butler’s room, from which he looks out upon the street, a little under the level of his eye. The lower hall is marble, or tiled. Off it are the kitchen quarters, and farther back is a room where the family dine *en famille*. Giving upon the garden, this room is often known as the *tuinkamer*.

A Rotterdam house, of the same social estate, but newer, in which I have sometimes enjoyed hospitality, is of another construction. The drive leads to a low ground floor with the domestic offices, and from it a broad staircase mounts to a suite of lofty living rooms—an ante-room and a large drawing-room, with sliding doors giving entrance to a spacious dining-room, and windows looking out upon the river side of the city. One of these windows leads out into a balcony, from which a stair descends to the garden.

I am writing as if it exists still as it was many years ago, when we used to be received in it: since then our entertainers, at least, have gone down among the "dusty dead," and doubtless many common customs have become uncommon. We dined, dining well, at an early hour, before going on to the opera, where Madame had a box. Dressed in black, not *décolletée*—she kept no maid, but each morning a hairdresser from the town came in to dress her hair—our hostess looked the type of robust Dutch comfortableness. There was about her what the Scots call a "bein air," which her polished, massive surroundings reflected; she had in her face the blended dignity and knowingness of Elizabeth Bas, aristocrat, or rather patrician of burgher womanhood, as she sat in the heavily-panelled and curtained dining-room with a young company around her. At her foot under the table, I remember, was a bell for summoning the servants, who did not remain in the room during the courses—I think that conversation might flow more intimately.

This youthful company was interesting, because it was very special old Rotterdam. I do not recollect observing (though it was noticeable in other classes) the loudness of dress, but there was sometimes unmistakable the accent, which the rest of Holland, in disconsideration of this city, imputes to all its natives. The Dutch pay ourselves the compliment of calling it an English town. The ground of this discrimination, I gather, is not so much its wealth as the manner of amassing wealth, and less the amassing it by trade than the unabashed pride in trade itself. Distinctions between Piet Plank and Piet Zeep were readily accepted by wood merchant and soap boiler themselves; and one of them had proudly incorporated a wheelbarrow in his coat of arms, to commemorate the lowly round in which his

family first trundled to fortune. This foundation on the bare half-crown, it seems, is the English manner. We are a nation of "men from Sheffield." How various is our national repute abroad!

There has been an English colony in Rotterdam ever since the passing of the Navigation Acts made it profitable for British shipowners and traders to establish themselves there. Mr. Peregrine Pickle, it will be remembered, was invited to meet a large company of his countrymen at Rotterdam, of all ranks and degrees, from the merchant to the periwig-maker's 'prentice. Their numbers are greatly diminished now, but English words and phrases have crept into the town's everyday parlance.

"*Heb je lucifers, Mina?*"—"O! ja, plenty, *juffrouw*." This conversation I once overheard between a Rotterdam young lady and her maid. And from the adventures of "Boefje," the Wee Macgregor (with a difference) for whom M. Brusse has achieved popularity, I gather that the Rotterdam raggamuffin decorates his debased speech with occasional English. "*'t vagevuur was hem te heet an ze boddie*": Boefje opined that hell would be too hot for his "body."

But let us get back to the house with the stoep and seek admittance by the front door, on or beside which, by the way, the name of the occupier and the number of the house are generally neatly displayed. It used to be a half-door, which is still not uncommon. In most new houses, as in many of the old, the street doors have a *grille* or *rooster*, protecting a glass panel, which in summer is kept open, letting in air and light and a glimpse of what is passing in the world outside. When you make a call after nightfall, dropping in to drink tea in the friendly fashion of the country, you are sighted through the *rooster* by the housemaid before she admits you with a kind of family smile.

A constant object in the hall, which attracts the stranger's eye, is the *fonteintje*, with spotless towel looped on a nail beside it. This "little fountain" is merely a marble or earthenware hand-basin and reservoir, which has come into general use in a country where water, so plentiful everywhere outside the house, was seldom led within it. It is comparatively seldom led into it now. Half the population of Holland is still without a central water supply. The habit of copious personal ablutions has not been achieved. Few Dutch households possess a bathroom yet, and where there is a bathroom it does not always contain a bath. To install one is by many regarded as faddy. The lodgings of some student friends of mine who did so had considerable, and I believe a profitable, notoriety as "the rooms with the bath." On the other hand, I know of a modern house with bathroom and bath unused, because the occupier, a medical doctor, jibs at the expense of bath-fittings. Decidedly there is as yet no Dutch verb *tubben*.

Arriving some months ago at a late hour at a hotel starred "first-class" in one of the largest cities, I found it full; all the inns in town were in the same case—strangers had arrived in crowds for a special occasion—and I was glad to sleep in a bed made up in the sample-room. Over night I ordered a bath, and the morning saw me punctually escorted through the labyrinth of the building to the distant corridor where, I was assured, "it" awaited. There was evidently only one "it," to be spoken of with the temporising respect due to a disconsidered institution which looks as if it may assert its usefulness after all.

Our progress, which on the part of my attendant maid seemed remarkably like one of discovery, was followed by the surprised glances of the charwomen

brushing and swabbing in the halls and passages. The chamber I was ultimately ushered into could only be described as a bathroom, though as such it left much to be desired. I discovered, before I left it, more bath than room. The door did not shut; the bolt was broken, the key had been lost. A chair, over the back of which hung a magnificent bath-towel (with the initials of the hostess daintily sewn in red cotton), had been imported from a neighbouring bedroom. The only other furniture was a German-made, unenamelled bath, which leaked; a douche that never ceased to drip, yet could not be persuaded to come on in greater force; and a most daintily turned apparatus for suspending clothes, which was of the dimensions and strength of a pipe-rack. Accommodation for disrobing and robing again there was none. The bath, as I say, leaked. The floor of the room had been metal-lined, evidently with a provision of inundation; and on this floor, thus converted into a kind of ante-bath, was laid an open gangway, which failed to keep one's feet out of the water that lipped up over it with a noisome scum of metal.

I shut the door by propping the chair against it, and had my bath; but dressed adventurously, all the points of my garments persisting in dipping in the rising flood. The adventure, I may say, was not charged in the bill: I do not doubt it was an unheard of item.

So much for the significance of the fair *fonteintje* fixed on the white wall. For the rest, the hall calls for no remark. It is simply furnished. A strip of carpet, the *looper*, runs its full length. There are a few mats, seldom many rugs; the doors off it have wooden thresholds to keep out of the rooms the draught that sweeps across the polished marble. Here and there perhaps a picture or print relieves its gleaming bareness, and somewhere a wag-at-the-wall ticks out the time.

CHAPTER III

DUTCH INTERIORS (*continued*)

THE run of the house being our privilege, we will go down the short staircase to the kitchen. Our intrusion will not be resented. A maid in my house of memories seems to make herself one of the family and the family to make her one of themselves, without either, as the strange saying is, "forgetting their place." The mistress's housewifely pride communicates itself to her domestic helps, and if *Mevrouw* has an evident pleasure in showing the stranger a Dutch kitchen, *Dientje* and *Truitje* and *Myntje* share and show the pleasure as well.

It is a vision of whitewash and white tile and well-scrubbed woodwork, and innumerable sparkling surfaces of copper, tin, and brass. The male eye is caught by the bright brass balls in which terminate the handles of the great double-pump, that discharges spring- and rain-water at choice through its large brass nozzles, and by the deep fireplace and a high projecting mantelpiece with a violet-coloured valance that recall some *Jan Steen*.

Mevrouw at my elbow touches in the details of the picture: on the walls the *poffertjespan* and *glazenspuit* (whose uses will appear later), and bed-warmer and the soup-skimmer (how large the family pot must have been in olden days, and how excellently would this great skimmer roast chestnuts!); the brass pails on the cup-

board ; on the mantelpiece, amid an orderly medley of tins, a pestle and mortar of brass, and the wooden coffee-mill with its brass top. I remember being shown in the same way in a Groningen farmhouse the ancient dogs and firearms belonging to past generations of *boers*, and the dairying utensils of yesterday, just gone out of use with the coming in of the creameries ; all laid away, and brought out again on occasion to be handled with a half-amused pride and reverence. This care and curiosity for things simply old accounts partly for these furnishings of the Dutch kitchen, but still more, I fancy, they hang there to trap brightness for existence under a sky that in the winter months, except during the ice festival, is sombre and leaden.

Here is the great peat bin. And here is a small box, with compartments, for cleansing-sands, red and white, of varying grit. There is no dresser rack, the *aanrecht*, which partly fills its place, being a low fixed cupboard near the pump, with a top for culinary services. The dinner and other ware is found in a closed cupboard in the wall, or displayed behind the glass door of an armoire. The kitchener is broad, with a central opening (fitted with loose rings) and other smaller ones to take the round-bottomed pots, all with double-ear handles. The mantelshelf projects a little over the bustling cook. Above it (this in the country) show the beams of the ceiling with suspended hams. There is a pervasive flavour of Drente peat.

The mention of peat recalls one of its uses which I have witnessed in this kitchen. A layer of it is spread upon the flags, and on this is set the *hazenpan*, a tin vessel shaped somewhat like the body of the hare which has been placed in it for cooking. After that, glowing peat is piled up over the pan, and under this slow fire, with constant basting, the hare is done to a turn. That

operation vanishes, and by a trick of association another takes its place in memory in the same scene. It is the end of summer, when the white-runners are in season, and a thousand or more have arrived to order from the greengrocer. The hand-mill is placed on the kitchen table, and from it is spread a white tablecloth falling into the blue basket or *mand*. One maid feeds the mill, the other turning the handle. Thus merrily are sliced the *snyboontjes* for the winter's pickling.

Bright and neat and of course clean their kitchen is, but it scarcely provides comforts (in our sense) for its occupants. Perhaps I ought to say elegancies, for comforts to their own taste it undoubtedly does afford. It has sometimes seemed to me that I could hear the Dutch maids *purr* as they sat in these kitchens, their feet on the foot-stove with glowing peat, turning the coffee-mill in their lap, or peeling potatoes from the shallow, green wooden dish.

There is no carpet; only a loose wooden platform, on which stands the table, and another in front of the *aanrecht* keep the feet off the flags. No vase of flowers decorates the table. The chairs are straight-backed. There is the same absence of little elegancies in the servants' sleeping-rooms, boarded off under the roof of the attic. Mevrouw (who knows how English domestics are housed) assures me that the easy-chair is not desired by her servants, and is not appreciated by those of her neighbours who are indulged with it. "Indulged" is her own word: she is of the old school, never herself lounges in an arm-chair, and has no patience with modern ideas about equality of conditions. Yet in some respects she treats her aids in the kitchen with a friendliness, and a familiarity even, on which no mistress among us could venture without it being presumed upon. They have the dignity and self-respect of their class. She and they

are so sure of their respective places! Dutch society is constructed so.

And this reminds me of "the juffrouw," a newcomer much in evidence to-day, who occupies a position somewhere between the kitchen and the family quarters to which we are now returning. The name is given to those who fill the posts of our "lady housekeeper" and our "mother's help"; but here I am thinking particularly of "de juffrouw" for the children, or *kinderejuffrouw*. The juffrouw is their nurse, but not their nursemaid. She never has a costume, as the nursemaid is now beginning to have. The Dutch have no generic equivalent for our "nurse": the trained sister sent out from an institution, from the *diakonessenhuis*, for example, is a *pleegzuster*; the trained maternity nurse a *verpleegster*; the untrained, a *baker* (this ancient family piece, conspicuous in Dutch literature, still survives); the wet nurse is a *min*; the nursemaid is the *kindermid*. "The juffrouw" is most nearly defined by calling her a nursery-governess; only that, as I am about to explain, there are few nurseries in Holland, and the status of the governess is there jealously preserved. She is known then as "de juffrouw," and the children call her "juffie" or "juff," as here they would call her "nursie" or "nannie," imagining that so she was christened.

Though there is a tax upon domestic servants in Holland, there is none upon a *juffrouw*. Let no one think, however, that this opens a way to enjoying a dutiable service without paying the impost. I have heard of a household being pounced upon with a demand note (or its Dutch equivalent) because its "juff" had been seen to "answer the door bell," a taxable servant's duty. It is not easy to evade the Dutch Receiver. He never sleeps, and, according to stories one hears, employs spies and rewards informers.

I was really led to write of the "useful juffie" by recollecting that in our progress of the house we shall often look in vain for the nursery which she is supposed to adorn. If it does exist, it is probably a small apartment so called because it conveniently stores the children's toys. One reason for the absence of nurseries in Dutch houses is that there is no room for them. All along the scale Dutch houses are smaller than ours, and their two or three living-rooms, usually lofty, occupy a large proportion of the cubic space. But the main reason is that no one wishes the children kept to special quarters of their own.

This is one of the matters in which our customs and our neighbours' are antipodal. Just as in Holland the foot-passenger must stand aside for the vehicle, and here he has the privilege of the high road, so instead of children being sent out of the way of their elders, as with us, in Holland the elders remove themselves out of the way of the children. The parlour is the children's playground. They have the run of the house. When they become too numerous, as they have a way of doing, they overflow into the street and square.

In such houses as we are here exploring, the children live from their infancy in the company of their parents. The Dutch mother can say, like Madame Daudet, that she has "always kept her children in her pocket"; and her pocket ought to be larger than her French neighbour's, for she generally has more to put in it. Thus throughout Holland (except where the fashion of the later dining hour has been adopted), somewhere between five and six, all Dutch families, including even the baby, the "juffie" in attendance, are sitting down to dine together.

This custom of Dutch parents to companion their children (or Dutch children their parents) is favoured by the system of education; and this brings me to speak of

the house where, with or without a "juffrouw," there is a *gouvernante*, and where, if there is an apartment to spare for a nursery, it is rather converted into a schoolroom.

The giving to the governess her French title points to a time when that language was dominant in Dutch education. A generation in Holland just passing away received the elements of all instruction in French books. The French school was not so long ago an important institution. Mr. Motley, by his eloquence and enthusiasm, has rather coerced the English-speaking public into concentrating their interest in the Dutch upon the seventeenth century, and as a consequence they often miss the marks of the influence of France on modern Holland. These *souvenirs profonds et éclatants* (as a Frenchman spoke of them to me the other day) are met at every turn: in the code of Justice, in the regulation of the communes, the ideals of education—the "neutrale"-school, for example,—but still more in the little significant things we are most on the track of, like the neat white numbers painted on every door of every farm-place. There French logic and Dutch orderliness meet. One of these "survivals" is the continuance of French influence in a scheme of education which virtually makes a knowledge of French the pass from the elementary to the intermediate school. But to-day French takes its place only as part of a more liberal system, which I hope to display elsewhere in this book. Here I am confining myself to the rôle played in it by the schoolroom in the house.

For children to the age of six, any method of education may be adopted which the parents desire. Book-learning is wisely discouraged. It is compulsory, however, that between six and thirteen they receive such instruction as is provided, at a varying cost, in the different primary schools. They may, indeed, receive it

where the parents will, but only from certificated teachers. The mother is not considered qualified to impart it, unless she has passed the examinations for an elementary teacher, and received the certificate *hulp-acte*. If she has not done that, and yet education of the children at home is considered desirable, or circumstances make it imperative, then a certificated instructor must be employed to teach them.

The Dutch tutor and governess, therefore, are always qualified, or at least certificated. They may complete the education they have begun, or they may only prepare their pupils of tender years for entrance to the intermediate or the Latin schools or to the University. At the elementary stage, when the primary school is not convenient, they are the only alternative to the boarding-school.

Boarding-schools for both boys and girls are plentiful, and are much used by children from the Dutch Indies, who, however, are not sent home so young as Anglo-Indian parents think desirable. In the highest classes the sons (after perhaps sitting in the country primary school; I know of such cases) are sometimes tutored at home for the University. Others of them, again, go (or used to go) to the school "Northey" at Voorschoten, which for many years has been conducted on English Public School lines, though the important accomplishment of cricket, I believe, has never been acclimatised. The reaction from rather too bookish an instruction is leading to much experiment, in boarding, as in other schools, not all of it obviously wise. With the intention of fostering the breadth and self-reliance which the English Public Schoolboy is believed to possess, the director of one of these institutions gives the boarders a free pass, to come and go, in the evening hours until 10 p.m. I expect soon to hear of one with a latchkey.

The girls of the same rank are most often sent from their governess's hands to boarding-schools, abroad or at home ; but some have been caught up in the stream of Dutch women following the higher-education career. "Deportment" is less importunate than it used to be in the training of the young Dutch lady. The boarding-school where she was taught the art of graceful ascent and descent in inclement weather when the roads are muddy has gone into the limbo of forgotten things, like the old family coach which was set up in its attic for that course of instruction. Yet I doubt whether the relics of that coach are not still in that attic. In Holland few things are considered too obsolete for storing in the *zolder*.

The great majority of Dutch children, however, are educated in the strenuous atmosphere of the public schools, or in that, often not less strenuous, of the schoolroom in the house. In either case they remain, until well into their teens at least, under their parents' roof, and enjoying their daily and often hourly companionship.

Having brought them so far from the nursery and the schoolroom, we may observe them a little farther. We promised ourselves a leisurely and comprehensive survey.

The strictness of the Dutch girl's upbringing has been considerably relaxed of recent years. One of my hostesses, who appears to allow her daughters just as much freedom as any English mother would, told me that she herself, until she was twenty, was not permitted to appear out of doors without her companion. Her recollection is that that was not unusual in stiff towns and stiff homes such as hers. Certainly in the street, she says, girls acknowledged the bows of their male acquaintances, and passed on : it would have occasioned a small scandal to have stopped to speak even with a distant kinsman (if he were young).

Another recalled how she and her sisters thought twice before they walked past the students' club in the square. She cast no reproach on the manners of Dutch students twenty years ago, though possibly she did on the modesty of some Dutch schoolgirls, whose fondness for that part of the town was a byword, and a bogey to her and her sisters. Reflecting on the matter, she is of opinion that perhaps there was too much consciousness of the existence of students among the daughters of these safeguarded homes. Now a healthier relationship exists with less formality between the sexes. The ice, wonderful to say, thawed etiquette. Young men and maidens might go skating when they might not go walking together. Later on they might go walking in clubs; safety was discovered in numbers. There was no hard-and-fast custom, and there is none now. The conventions varied with the family, and the town, and the condition, and vary with them still. But tennis and the cycle have wonderfully broken down barriers among them all.

The Dutch girl when she "comes out" is emerging from no cloistered seclusion, and the training of the Dutch boy is such as to make him well able to look after himself. Dutch chaperons, being also human, have often a friendly blind eye. Occasions for young men and maidens meeting are quite evidently as plentiful and as happily taken in Holland as at home. The formularies before marriage are different, and some of them elaborate. Since the father's consent to marriage is required until son and daughter are thirty, his consent is more eagerly sought for the engagement also. Fair reports being gleaned of the wooer's character and conduct, there follows an inquisition on finance; sympathetically, however, directed towards his prospects rather than his present position. Give every young man his chance!

There is nothing detrimental in a long engagement. And no complication is started from the other side on the question of settlements. The dowry is not an institution in Holland, where all children share equally. So at length, the matter being "in order" (as the Dutch say), the franked couple send out their cards together, thus announcing themselves engaged, and further proclaim it by appearing arm-in-arm in the streets.

Then follows the acknowledged courtship. I know no equivalent for the word in Dutch, but in Holland the thing is conspicuous, even a little loud. It also has its conventions. There might perhaps be an objection to the lovers making two at a country house party. But in one thing there is shown a characteristic Dutch blend of sentiment and naiveness. It is assumed that the two hearts beat for each other alone. Opportunities are arranged and taken for them to do so, frankly, in public. Invited together and seated together, the lovers sup together and dance together, and neither goes where the other is not. That a girl should enjoy a ball without her fiancé passes wonder among her companions. And so it is throughout the engagement.

There is an old Frisian rural custom, still practised, I hear, known as the *joen-piezl*, by which a man and a girl about to be married must first sit up for a whole night in the kitchen with a burning candle on the table between them. It is assumed that by the time the candle is burnt low in its socket they must be ardently fond if they are not heartily sick of each other. Something like the *joen-piezl* is the ordeal of the engagement period !

The legal preliminary to marriage of *aanteekening* or "signing on" is regarded as the signal of betrothal, and cards announcing the wedding-day a fortnight later, as

well as the reception at the home of the bride, go out from her parents and the bridegroom's together. But betrothal is not more legally binding than the earlier engagement. A case for breach of promise does not lie in Holland. In essentials no pride of noble birth over-matches that of Dutch citizen society.

But it is not allowed to be a barrier to practicality. Only very near or old friends could contribute a cheque to the bride's trousseau without wounding susceptibilities. Some value comes to a gift through the trouble taken in choosing it. Yet discretion also enhances its worth. So the bride makes a "list," which lies with her mother or other relation, and is consulted by friends, who can thus choose their presents to suit their purses and her needs at once. In this practical way is avoided a collection of compote dishes and modern blue that would furnish a respectable window in the Kalverstraat. This custom of the list is followed at birthdays as well.

The reception, three or four days before the marriage, is the climax of its social formularies and festivities. For a fortnight the bridegroom is scarce ever out of his dress coat, the wedding garment in Holland. The bride appears at the reception in bridal array, heading two families made one for the occasion, and carefully marshalled in the *voorkamer* according to the rules of precedence. Marriage is one of the occasions for counting kin in Dutch families, which have vast ramifications that generally some member of them punctiliously traces. A patient genealogist, one fancies, could easily prove all Holland related. With the deep-seated sense of family in the Dutchman there goes a sane discrimination. Among so many affinities, cousins can be counted without prejudice. A wedding is a jolly reunion. Bride and bridegroom are happily adopted into each

other's family circle. But neither is invited to marry the clan.

They drive together on the wedding morning in a little white-satin-lined brougham to the town hall, where the burgomaster or his deputy joins them man and wife, and is the first to felicitate Mevrouw in a little speech. There is no ceremony beyond the recital of the section of the Code. The bridegroom is unattended. The bride has her maids, and perhaps a small page. The register is signed, and the party possibly drives on to seek the Church's blessing, which is longer in giving than the civil sanction. Dutch praise is always long drawn out. The Dutch dominee is never "a barber of prayers" or of addresses. An offertory is taken for the poor. And then the party returns for the *déjeuner*, during the jollities and orations of which man and wife are allowed to steal away in their brougham without embarrassing rice or old slippers advertising their bliss.

The party they leave behind generally spend the evening at an *uitspanning* if it is summer, or, if it is winter, fill a row in the theatre. I heard of a wedding the other day for which a theatre and the company were engaged for the night, and a dance was given in the foyer.

A friendly eye supervising these pages reminds me that I have said nothing of the custom of the ring in Holland. It does not appear in the marriage ceremony, either civil or ecclesiastical. Plain gold rings are exchanged at the engagement, and worn upon the third or "ring" finger of the left hand. After marriage they become the marriage rings, and are worn on the right. This usage can be traced back for two hundred years. Earlier than that, custom varied. The wife sometimes had on her thumb a double ring, one hoop of which had been worn by the husband during betrothal. That

was in the days when lovers broke a ducaton between them and sometimes signed their marriage in their blood.

This has been a long excursion from our typical Dutch house, where there still await two rooms into which we must glance. One is the small audience-chamber, or *spreekkamer*, a plainly furnished little room, conveniently tucked away somewhere not too far from the front door. It reminds us that a variety of business transacted by ourselves at the office or chambers, or over luncheon at the club, is done by Dutchmen in their private houses; and there its interest for us would cease were it not for one object in it. This is a safe, disguised as a cupboard. There is in Holland the body of smallish *rentiers* which is the inevitable creation of continued subdivision of properties; and there are also, we shall see, in almost all Dutch families resources of fortune, however trifling, which are rather to be traced to the determination to live within a scheme of personal security. As a result, monies which might have fostered local industries have been invested in foreign stocks and foreign undertakings. To this day there is, even among the humbler shopkeeping classes, a continual peddling with the nearest notary in foreign bearer bonds, which may partly account for the notorious exploitation of the larger shops by foreign capital. A great extension of banking has occurred in the last ten years, among the agriculturists especially; but still, outside commerce, few Dutchmen carry a cheque-book or have a banking account. Household and personal bills are invariably paid in cash. Each house has its safe.

With no lukewarm concern do I approach next, not the inner sanctum, indeed, but one of its immediate outer courts in the Dutch woman's domain. The *provisiekamer*, as she calls her store-room, is often less a small

room than a large cupboard. Here it is of greater dimensions, at the back of the house, away from the sun. I remember another, bone-dry and fresh-smelling, in the cellar depths of a moated grange. Whereas the sun seemed always to be shining in on the one beside the Rhine of which I had my first vision; and that remains the archetype of all later impressions.

A fair apartment, with a window on the face of the house turned towards the street, across which is drawn a screen of plane-trees. Inevitably whitewashed, precisely shelved; a square of Spanish matting on the boards. On the shelves small Cologne pots with pickled onions, gherkins, and cucumbers, and a large flat one for butter; bottles of sterilised vegetables and fruit; the canister with coffee-beans; those for tea—kitchen tea, morning tea, evening tea, each of considered quality; yellow, barrel-shaped jars, ringed with brown, holding sago, sugar, rice; smaller white ones, with the names of their contents—cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, mace—carefully lettered upon them. A wooden rack with eggs. In a cupboard, a ripe Gouda from the farm (not the factory, yet): the taste here runs against soft cheese. On the back wall an assortment of new, spare mats and brushes and besoms, in case any of those in use should become suddenly indisposed, and the whole morning's service in the house be disorganised.

There are auxiliary stores throughout the house. The apples and pears are spread, near the bulbs, in one of the attics. Potatoes and beans seek the coolness of the cellar, next door to the wine, where also the *jenever* and vinegar and oil are laid in.

The reader, remembering the Dutchman's fondness for his cigar, may ask if I have not missed a chamber for its enjoyment in this house of memories. I have been noting the ash-tray in them all. The aroma of

Sumatra lingers everywhere. We may say of Dutch houses, as Mr. Pickwick remarked of the streets of Rochester, that "the smell which pervades them must be exceedingly delicious to those who are extremely fond of smoking."

CHAPTER IV

THE HOUSE AND THE HOME

THIS is still another chapter about homely things. Some readers may consider it unworthy of my subject and them to have kept them so long among the brasses and the Coln pots of the kitchen and the still-room. I confess to have watched with qualms this section expand under the persuasive direction of my publishers. Yet I am not sure that the quality of the Dutch can anywhere be so well revealed as during such a leisurely, curious perambulation of their houses.

Certainly there are few things of importance in Holland that do not connect themselves with her home life. Dutch careers are largely followed in the house. The women are absorbed in its management, and many of the men do their work in and from it. Few—it is one of the conditions of a small country—are called upon to sleep a night away from their own roofs, and there are certain classes of citizens who appear to issue from under them seldom even by day.

Countrymen of mine, for example, have often asked me why in Amsterdam at least they never caught sight of the upper classes. It is possible that they saw them without recognising them. Amsterdam patricians are shy, reserved birds with nothing in their plumage to distinguish them for the stranger. Indeed, good burgher folk in Holland seldom, out of the Hague, quite dress their

worldly part, and some still cultivate on the contrary a pedantic contempt for the fashions. A young English merchant once told me ruefully how he received a Rotterdam millionaire *de haut en bas*, estimating his visitor, as our practice is, at the value of his clothes. I recall the derisive smiles of soberly clad Dutch professors at a University town function when two sparkish members of the Corps Diplomatique appeared in correct Bond Street liveries. And Dutch ladies living abroad assure you that before they revisit their homes they pack away their dressmaker's latest creations, and choose others less modish, fearful of losing the respect of friends and relations by dressing over well. Besides, the boys in the streets would mob them.

In all this, indeed (save the rudeness of these gamins), a change appears in recent years. Is it perhaps indicated in the time-tables of the various "household" schools which they have seen established for the training of ladies' maids and the like? Many Dutch girls who previously would have been doomed to the obscurity of plainness are now blossoming into beauty at a deft millinery touch. Still, the Dutch are in no sense "smart," and they would rather resent it did you call them so.

Let me not be mistaken. Dutch ladies dress well, and all Dutch women soundly. It is the business of dressing that is little cultivated—perhaps too little. The "smartness" that is noticeably lacking means no more than the latest modes, and is evidently the easiest possible thing to acquire for those who set their heart upon it. And here I may note my impression, after consideration of a certain "antiquity" appearing throughout Dutch life, that what English and American eyes most miss in it is seldom unpurchasable.

The foreign observer is right, however, in remarking

the absence of patrician ladies in Amsterdam streets. Plain or smart, except for the afternoon drive and a brief shopping hour in the Leidschestraat, they withdraw themselves, a little primly, from the public gaze. They are not seen at the opera on an ordinary night which would draw our patricians, and a gala night, when they are present in force, is an occasion to be remembered. Other classes in the city are less reticent, as the Kalverstraat, for example, bears daily and nightly witness; but this does not refute the general observation that all Holland, on the land and in the towns, seeks seclusion behind its own shut doors. It is not fanciful to say that here also the Dutch "enclose." They are a domesticated people. I have heard the criticism upon their outlook by an American who lived long among them. He said that theirs was the "home-view." And I propose in this chapter to seek some understanding of this home-view from the family room in my Dutch house of composite memories.

It enhances Dutch hospitality—surely the most gracious and homely bloom of that virtue—that it admits to so intimate a circle. They do not keep open house in our off-hand sense in Holland. Entertaining there has in it less of lightly come and lightly go. Many of the most desirable households live on a simple scale. Great establishments are few. It is not usual to keep troops of servants. The day's routine may not be wantonly disorganised. A disturbance of the linen-cupboard is a matter for grave consideration. The Dutch housewife, moreover, like the French, regards it as one of the duties of hospitality to offer her guest a dinner worthy of his acceptance. "Pot-luck" does not appear in her invitations.

It is true to say that the key to the Dutch house is the "good" introduction. Even in the Dutch Indies, I

am told, where open house is one of the conditions of life, this passes you on with a difference through the marble loggias. Towards a guest so introduced, the Dutchman regards hospitality as one half a duty. He assumes that this claim to his services will not have been put upon him unwarrantably, and he accepts it with a sense of responsibility. His friend's friend is for the time his friend. My host as I write this, whom I had not seen before, anticipated our meeting by some miles of my journey. Because my time was short, he came to "make a plan" with me on the remainder of the way for spending it most advantageously. His house, his hours, his introductions were placed at my command. "It will be best," he said, "that you do as if you were my brother." Nothing could have been more charmingly responsible than his welcome.

And from his village there runs a road to the woods of Guelders and the uplands of Overijssel, and north to the fringes of Groningen; and down by Utrecht, and the Vecht and the Lek, and round the lowlands to the capital itself. Along it, hospitable doors have been pushed open, family circles made free with a charming grace. The traveller who is looking back now along that pleasant road confesses to feeling like one sitting in a café in the Kalverstraat, Dutch fashion, on the outer, dark side of the drawn curtain, looking forth upon the promenade. He thinks of the bulky notebook in his pocket, and the notes in his valise, and all the fine speculations revolving in his head,—“Where the Dutch live,” “How the Dutch vote,” how they work, and play, and eat and drink, and study, and make love. What, he asks himself, is it that he is proposing to do with them, when he has turned them into a book, but to sit in the dark and measure a whole people with his own little rule of comfort or inveterate sentiment or prejudice?

Yet there is still another element in Dutch hospitality which dispels all such qualms. Admitting the guest of the house with a sense of duty, it expands readily under his pleasure in his entertainment. Your hosts in Holland warm quickly to your interest in what they have to show and tell you, and you are made delightfully to feel that your own response opens the inner doors.

I am not sure that there is not still another element in their welcome, that of responsibility to their country. May we not say that the Dutch enclose their national sentiment also upon the house, thus giving it its curiously personal intensity? Their patriotism is not the pride of a great Power, though their history also colours it deeply. It only partly defines its object as a geographical area. It seems to me that a desire and hope for the persistence of a tradition, of a way of life and particularly of looking at life, which can only be called Dutch, largely composes it. And this something Dutch is preserved most jealously in the house, and, because their sentiment attaches to material objects, in the things in the house.

Here we are on the track of the "home-view" which the American critic discovered. In a very special sense the Hollander's house has a national quality. Even in a foreign country it contrives to surround itself with a Dutch atmosphere. And that is why, if one would write with understanding of Holland, he must discuss the intimacies of her hearths, and even with seeming indecency analyse the nature of his welcome at them.

The best figure for the Dutch home is the Dutch polder, entrenched and diked as far as the wit of the polderman can devise against the waters of adversity. Most polders are very small affairs, yet each is an

independent entity which, however involved with its neighbours, administers its own affairs, and does so as punctiliously as if it were one of the greatest water-basins with the fortunes of half the nation at stake within it.

From top to bottom of the social scale—at least within the widest limits of the middle classes—there appears still, as Sir William Temple discovered in his day, a careful keeping of accounts, which is more than half the secret of careful living. It is indeed a happy circumstance for the majority in Holland that the scale is comparatively so restricted that no one is ashamed of practising small economies. For in this ironical country, where there is hoarded wealth, as the financiers of the world know, earned incomes are ludicrously small. The cost of living, moreover, is not low. And although most people appear to live remarkably well, all live carefully. Extravagance there is none. A perfectly frank display is made of managing on small margins. The aim of most appears to be not only to avoid exceeding their incomes, but to keep within them. “Lay past something each year, be it only a cent” is the counsel of Dutch Nestors. *Een appeltje voor de dorst* (an apple for the thirst) is the prudent reserve of Holland, and it has been so carefully stored for generations that most households start with some inherited resources, however tiny. And these are not wantonly drawn upon. If something outside the usual routine of life is contemplated, a “pot” is made from savings upon the customary expenditure. This is true even of most comfortable households. All make much of small excursions from life’s habitual levels, and it might be contended that they get more than we do out of life by thus grasping at less.

No doubt on the other hand they miss much through risking little. The sense of security which they enjoy

(so far as that is possible in the lot of man) restricts their actions and their outlook. The home-view has the defects of its qualities. And here is to be noted one of the contradictions with which this curious people abound. While their habits are so stay-at-home, their minds range freely over all fields of speculation. Their command of tongues induces them to open the door to every new doctrine. They entertain strange prophets, and many a quack. But first, before the intruder enters, they turn an inner key upon their convictions. Sticklers for ideas, they hold fast to experience. Often incapable of compromise, they yet never find it difficult to keep theory and practice distinct. Like Voltaire's journalist, but in all honesty, they will not bet on the information they are ready to swear to. And therein as often as not they are wise.

At all costs they mak' siccar. Shrewd and of an eminent integrity in business, they strike the merchants of more audacious countries as throwing away opportunities in their determination to be safe. I suspect some of these merchants of meaning opportunities of being smart. The exceptions, these add, show an extreme of reckless plunging. So it is in private life. There are daring iconoclasts, with their theories of free marriage and the like, publicly flaunted, even in newspaper announcements. But the rule of the home is the safe one of an extreme respectability.

Looking out from this circle, it is the uniformity of the life that strikes one as most significant. There is a variety of conditions, of course, and a distinction of class even more marked than that of social estate. There are differences of race and of religion. There is certainly an infinite diversity of opinion. The farmer is not as the townsman. The cities tenaciously preserve their individualities. Province differs from Province. I do not know

the extreme south of the country, but there, one is always told, life and character are French. In the east you find German influences in daily customs like the midday dining hour as in the speech of the policeman. Yet it is the similarity of life, in the outlying provinces as in the Hollands proper, that I have remarked most. It is not only that you can tell what the men and women of each class will be doing at most hours of the day, but that during many hours of it those in all classes will be doing the very same thing.

I shall give some examples, choosing still the homeliest. In Amsterdam this winter it fell to me on several mornings, taking the place of her usual companion, to convoy the little daughter of the house to school. It was a delight to be out on the grachts on these sharp mornings, when the sun glistened on the rime, and a thin mist rose among the bridges; and the scene was animated by crowds of fathers and mothers, sisters, governesses, juffrouws, all with their charges, on errands similar to my own. Each morning we met the same parties, it seemed to me, punctually at the same spot. In that regular passage acquaintanceships were budding; the way was variegated with many shy half-nods of recognition. And I realised that all over Holland, just as I had seen it in a score of scattered houses, the routine of life at this hour was directed by this serious occupation, for elders and children alike, of primary education. I shall always think of Amsterdam, in the hours between eight and nine, as assiduously going to school.

I shall take another example of this uniformity, venturing on it a little dubiously, however, for it brings me to ground of which Dutch hostesses are jealous. In our progress of the house we did not linger at the linen cupboard. It is to be found in no particular room, but



'AN AMSTERDAM CANAL (GRACHT)

FROM THE PAINTING BY WILLEM WITSEN (TOWN MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM)

is set up in any most convenient ; wherever it is, there is the housewife's pride. I discovered the finest example known to me of the cupboard itself, one built on beautiful bellying lines, in a remote little inn to which I had been taken to inspect a service of Delft that indeed would excuse the greenest shade of envy. When I begged to see the interior of the handsome piece, the hostess was summoned, and beamingly unlocked to view as fair an array of linen as Dutch mansion could show.

Great as ancient is this institution of the *linnenkast*. You can still see in farms in Overijssel rolls of linen, eaten away and falling to pieces with age, which were brought home by brides of generations ago. And the pride of the trousseaux of all Holland's daughters is still the products of Twenthe or Brabant looms ; treasures kept in these cupboards, mangled (not ironed), folded, pressed, tied with daintiness, regarded with pride, handled with affection, stacked with care, and even, I am told, with a measuring-rule.

It is long since I made the acquaintance of the Dutch garret, and discovered its possibilities for those permitted to rummage in it. Among its multifarious contents, I soon observed, were generally a clothes-horse, a square laundry basket, and a laundry tray (a *kleerebak*). And now I never visit a house in Holland without begging a sight of the *zolder*, for I have an exciting bet with myself that in no one where appear horse, basket, and tray, shall I fail to find them painted a particular light shade of blue, with the initials of the owner stamped in neat white letters upon them. So far I have not lost my bet.

I do not, I think, in all this exaggerate the concentration upon the house and its contents which the Dutch still exhibit, or do wrong to catch in it still the spirit of the old time, especially as it has been preserved

in the art of Holland in the seventeenth century. All her painters, each within the limits of his powers, and each after his own manner, showed no "ballooning," no vapouring, no rhetoric, but the concentration of aim, of energy of character, upon the object, petty or great, of their painting. The result inevitably was great craft, often great art. But their appeal to their native contemporaries did not lie in that, consciously,—though, just because it is the outcome of concentrated forces, great craft in art is the final appeal. The things they painted, to us beautiful, touching, significant often, but as often saved from ugliness only because of the manner in which they were painted, were, in themselves, objects of a great, real concentrated interest, and often affection, for the Dutch people.

Nor, as is, or, at any rate, as was, so constantly assumed, did this sentiment flourish in a society of low culture. Many fall into the error of supposing it did through fixing their eyes too exclusively on the bucolic humours which occupied some of the seventeenth-century painters. Sir Walter Armstrong has pointed out how, contrary to the general rule, Dutch painting lost its salt as it condescended in the social grade. There are other interiors in Dutch art besides the taverns and *tabagies*, and they, with their evident refinement and elegance (acquired how, who shall say?), were found not only in the learned shades of the Rapenburg, but also in the houses of the merchants, traders, and officials, the jovial *schutters* and the sober regents, whose unseignorial features are subpœnaed often to support a futile theory of painting.

The canvases of Metsu, or the household of the Zwolle Receiver painted by its great son, illustrate the homeliness and refinement at once to which Dutch family life had attained during half a century of often

very brutal struggle, but, indeed, nurtured and achieved long before that. This essential culture in Holland before the War, as illustrated for me especially in the history and art of the great Terburg, is surely an illuminative fact in European history. It was like that of society in Edinburgh a century and a half later, which, indeed, in many of its aspects presents so interesting a parallel with it: whose intimacies in the open of the street and tavern, and the common stair, veiled deep reserves of the family life behind the closed doors of the lands.¹ If in the seventeenth century Dutch interiors, as at the Corporation boards and at the Schutters' feasts,—the jovial gatherings of the Arquebusiers celebrated in the canvases of Hals and van der Helst,—there was a frankness which modern taste does not permit, we ought to remember that the table manners of Sir William Temple once scandalised the Hague.

This sentiment attaching to material objects, and those especially of the house, which the Little Masters imputed to the accessories of their pictures, survives to-day, often within the same circle of homeliness and refinement, whose culture still escapes the superficial. It is a sentiment incommunicable to the stranger; yet if his sympathies do not catch some reflection of it, to heighten and overlay the mere interest of curious subject, neither the old art nor the new appearances of Holland will long refrain from boring him.

It might seem to follow from this uniformity of home life that there must be few social distinctions and few opportunities for the display of individuality; but this is not so. A mixed society living closely together, in similarity of condition, generally imposes on itself a somewhat complicated etiquette. In Holland classes are sharply marked off, and distinctions of titles, for example,

¹ The "lands" in Edinburgh are flats off common stairs.

are punctually regarded. With much informality, if less of ease, in life, and a great intimacy among friends, there goes a scrupulous social observance. The essential simplicity of life is encased in a certain shell of artificiality. Again, the Dutchman knows how to practise reserve without losing his individuality; which sometimes seems to manifest itself in a specially vivid way because of a routine in which he frequently moves. The restrictions of his life, like the necessity of rhyme to the poet, only compel him to clearer expression of himself.

All conditions of Dutch life have become more fluid in the last quarter of a century, markedly in the last decade, but those within the home remain wonderfully steadfast. Here, for example, is a town-house in Amsterdam, small and old, which still sets a spying-mirror or *spionnetje* to the street in the *voorkamer* window; yet the inmates are young, very modern, and quite incurious. Probably the only attentions the mirror receives are the ablutionary ones of the maid-servants, who, for all I know, may to-day be working to orders that have been handed on for a century. The members of this household are absorbed in a variety of interests, scholastic, artistic, and philanthropic, and possibly never have given a thought to revise the house surroundings as left by their parents at their death a few years ago. On the other hand, it is not improbable that while very modern and "free" they still cultivate a sentiment of loyalty to old Dutch ways which induces them to retain, for instance, this *spionnetje*. The white linen, long-fringed window blinds still fold up in a bunch of plaits like the spars of Venetians, and all behind them, except for two changes, remains much the same as I knew it in the parents' day. One of the rooms has become a bathroom, fitted with a geyser. The other change is that from the *huiskamer* have disappeared some ancient copies in oils, making place

for a jumble of prints, ancient and modern—Vermeers, Steinlens, Walter Cranes, and Roland Holsts. A Catholic Bohemianism is encamped here in legendary Dutch surroundings.

This contact of old and new, not merely in the materials, so to say, of living, but also in the sentiments, ideals, and outlook of life itself, explains the characteristic impression left by Holland to-day. Already from the circle of this family-room we can anticipate some of the contrasts that we are to find when we move out next into the street and market-place, and the senate-house.

Like the gaudy bonnet pitched upon the gold *oorijzer* of the North Holland woman, the new is everywhere superimposed upon the visible old. The Middle Ages jostle the twentieth century, as the old-model wagons the automobile on the dike. The Utrecht farm-hand lays down his flail, and mounting his cycle rides off to see Mr. Wynmalen fly. The Limburg *knecht* gives his team of oxen a holiday while he visits the Exhibition at Brussels. It may happen to a Wogrum dairymaid, who yesterday had never been so far from home as the capital of her own province, to sing to-morrow in a London music-hall. The householder in the islands turns off the electric light and puts himself to bed when the *klapper*, following the round of ten generations of the night-watch, sounds his rattle under the window and proclaims that the clock gives ten.

The most individualistic of peoples is a nation of co-operators. A race of idealists attaches its affections closely on material things. Fiercely loyal to their sovereign, they are at heart Republicans. Democrats, they live in rings. Citizens, theirs is the only written Constitution which mentions a nobility. Scornful of rank, they are punctilious about titles. Sticklers for the

right of private judgment, they fix their faith upon the expert in authority.

The country of the Higher Criticism is governed by Ministers committed to the literal interpretation of Old Testament Scripture. Essentially "modern," it is represented as hankering after the ideals of a theocracy, with the suffrage exercised only by the heads of households. While the rights of parents in it are so strictly maintained that a man or woman under thirty may not marry without their consent, children are taken from their incapable or neglectful guardianship into that of the State. The influence of woman is great, for life concentrates in the home; but she plays no part in public affairs, and legally her *status* is barbaric. Theology enters into every question in life, and alienists test for the credibility of witnesses with the problems of the Schoolmen.¹ Yet the churches are preached empty. And in this most contradictory of countries, the profession of High-Calvinism is *ton*.

¹ In the recent notorious Papendrecht case, which went out in a burst of derision over the Psychiaters, a body of these specialists was instructed to examine rustic witnesses as to their mental capacity. The first question they put to them was whether the Deity was male or female.

CHAPTER V

DUTCH COUNTRY

THAT all who visit their country do not do so in the proper spirit is, I gather from indirection at least, an opinion of the Dutch. I hear their complaint in the voice of the reporter, here quoted, abridged, from the *Alkmaar Courant* of a recent date:—

“On Saturday afternoon [he said] Alkmaar was visited by a party of twenty-nine English people. They came in auto's from Rotterdam, having seen on their way thence the Hague, Leiden, Haarlem; they found the towns pretty and the surroundings beautiful; and were going back *via* Hoorn, Edam, and Volendam, to Amsterdam, where they expected to dine about nine o'clock. What will these English be able to tell of Holland when they return home?”

A characteristic, purely Dutch, I may remark, is here attributed to us when it is assumed that on returning home we are anxious to tell what we have seen, and find others as eager to hear it. In any case, the paragraphist is a little exacting. Miss Una Silberrad, when she visited the bulb-fields, of which to write her very charming account, sailed in a bulb-boat from the Tower Bridge. We are not all so thorough as that, but are any of the Dutch? I have known a good many of them to spend a day or two in Wight—that island of their fancy—and enjoy them, and return home comfortably

refreshed and recreated, without being able to tell very much about England, or being reproached in England for having seen so little, or not taking more time to see so much. And why should not our automobilists, poor things, recreate themselves with a strenuous pleasure, without being reproached for not matching it with an equally strenuous mental toil?

There is a great deal of talk in Holland, as elsewhere abroad, about what "these English do," when their only oddity lies, like other people's, in doing it in their own way. When I remarked that to a Hollander once, he told me, quoting Benevenuto Cellini no less, that those who wish things done in their own way ought to make a world for themselves. "And so we English have," I answered him, "but——." I had only to point to the strangely compacted water and clay all about us to finish my remark. It ill becomes a Dutchman to reproach one with making a world.

From the Alkmaar paragraph is also to be extracted the information that in this country which the Dutch have so strenuously made for themselves, it is possible to lunch at Rotterdam, drink tea in Alkmaar, dine in Amsterdam, and sleep at the Hague—in fact, to cover in one half-day the region of Holland which holds the stock attractions for the stranger.

But just in these attractions we appear again to disappoint our hosts.

"I don't understand you English," said a Dutch young lady to me the other day in London. "When any of you write about Holland, you are always admiring our cows. It's 'the cows in the meadow,' and again 'the meadows with their cows': *toujours koeien*. From this eternal refrain I thought, 'In England they have no beautiful cows.' But now that I am here, though I have a great admiration myself for ours, I

think yours are not less lovely, and I'm sure you have as many as we have, and doubtless more, for in most things, you know, Mynheer, Providence has blessed you with plenty."

"But not such meadows," I suggested.

"Ah! You mean the canals and dikes and wind-mills and things."

"You don't deny them?" I asked.

"No. But all Holland doesn't lie under the level of the sea, or of the rivers either. Have you ever been in Guelderland, or Overysse, or in Het Gooi?"

I told her that I had; how I had caught a bewitching glimpse of the river at Ellekom from the Velper road, and walked over Hoog Soeren to see the deer at Aardhuis. And I sought, without hurting her feelings, to explain that, very beautiful and charming as I found it all, still we have ourselves scenery to match, possibly even to surpass it, but that the lowlands of Holland are something apart, a place by themselves, and that that is why the mills and the ditches and the dikes, and the meadows with their very ordinary cows, are so remarked by us.

She appeared to think, however, that I was claiming for my nation an æsthetic appreciation which it is well known our neighbours do not allow us.

"Call it only curiosity, then," I said; "the cult of the odd. Though that's an æsthetic refinement. The Japanese gardener cherishes the rare and twisted flowers, despising large blooms as merely a product of rich soil and the taste of the vulgar; and in the same way, my dear lady, we admire Nederland the bizarre. Like Perdita, who liked best her 'streaked gillyvors.'"

"Oh, tulips," she snapped me up. "Does nothing ever bore you?"

I admitted that perhaps even windmills and cows

would begin to pall on those who kept gazing on wind-mills and cows.

"You're only lazy," she said. "You remind me of Madame D'Hoguere, whose husband was Russian Ambassador at the Hague in our William First's time. She found it less trouble to reperuse an old book than to get a new one, and only at the seventh reading would say, '*Il me semble que l'auteur se repète un peu !*'"

Perhaps my lively critic, with her vials of derision so ready to overflow impartially, was right, and there is a little indolence in the persistent reperusal, not seven but seventy times, of the book of the Holland Lowlands. It is so easy and delightful to eat the lotus in the fat meadows, with the monotonous soft clank of the mills in the ear, or on the dike when you can just hear the wind lazily lifting its wings over the Zuider Zee. That has its influence upon the native, and may have it upon the stranger also. The damp, even the diet (for Smollett is doubtless right about vegetables; and coffee is drunk in excess), but at any rate the repose, of Holland, and her orderliness and unity which so fascinate the French, for example, depress vitality a little, and produce an effect of torpor, or at least of stolidity, of body if not of mind. You cannot deny the Hollander himself the merit of industry; but as the Scots ploughman said (only more frankly than I can quote him) when inviting the farmer to be seated, who on Sunday evening desired him to discuss the morrow's harvesting, "Master, you can do a power o' fatigue, sitting." What profound labours could not the summer-house seats of the Vecht—the Mennonite heaven—bear witness to the weight of!

Even this glancing allusion to the Hollander's sedentary habit, or "wise passiveness," would, I dare say, pique certain Dutch critics and acquaintances whom I



ON THE GEIN
AFTER THE PAINTING BY WILLEM ROELOFS

have in my eye: not because they are touchy upon national idiosyncrasies—to the initiated they deal faithfully with themselves, and especially with one another—but because they are just a little jealous of all unimportant, characteristic things, like these *koepels* by the Vecht, which deflect foreign appreciation from the modern interests and enterprises in which they would range themselves with the big world.

It cannot be denied that there is good reason for the Dutch reproach that the bizarre elements in their country's appearances have a foolish attraction for many strangers. It is precisely the complaint of Mr. Yoshio Markino about some who profess an interest in his country. "May I call these people curio-lovers," he says: "they love Japan because anything Japanese is strange in their eyes."

The tourists who swarm from the Amsterdam hotels every morning in summer may well be called curio-lovers. They love Holland so far as they find things in it that are strange to their eyes, and they have a way of looking at it (so some have of writing about it) as if it were a toy-shop or a comic opera. The breadth of their interest is that of the Marken beam, the refinement of it the shape of the patch on Urker breeches.

A witty Dutchman of my acquaintance has a name for the type. He calls it the "Volendam Englishman," which is excellent for a gibe, though here, where we are taking things very seriously, it requires some qualification. The Volendammer, so far as I have the pleasure of his acquaintance, is a wonderfully contained and simple man—he is also a Roman Catholic—who keeps to himself even his disdain for the tripper. I do not say that I have never been invited within his half-door to purchase the family tiles, but the manufacture and sale of sham curios on a grand scale he leaves to his insular, and Protestant,

neighbour of Marken, whose attitude towards the stranger whom he "does" or fails to "do," is that of his little boy who shouts after you "Yah!" Therefore it is "Marken," not "Volendam," which should give the local colour to my friend's jest.

I am afraid, however, that the substance of the Englishman cannot be kept out of it, though there are others of his family with as good a warrant for sharing his pillory. When any of our Anglo-Saxon race step upon the Dam in their first morning in the capital, they are immediately accosted by a guide with a "Marken, sir!" If by a miracle, for there is a whole machinery of touting that works to carry them there, they escape being lured to Marken, and hold on their way to the Rijks Museum, another guide outside its entrance hails them with a "Costumes, sir!" There is no incertitude, you see, as to where our interests lie. Imagine the foreigner visiting Edinburgh to snap-shot a Newhaven fishwife, or hastening past the British Museum to gape at the Highlander at Catesby's, and you have the precise parallel to the manner of seeing Holland which occasions the jest about the Volendam Englishman.

I hope I shall not fail to ingeminate respect in the reader for the resources of modern Holland, but her greatest possession, I declare, is still her landscape. There is nothing more characteristic about her home life, and nothing more potent in influencing it, than the strange and subtle beauty amid which her homes are set and home-lives led. It is a question whether the Dutch themselves always realise this. Most of them doubtless would believe that, writing as I do now, I must be referring to the wooded landscape in the East. To neglect that for the polderland is, as my clever lady revealed, often regarded as one of the slights which the foreigner puts upon their country. It shows the taste of

many of them that he is so frequently reproached for dwelling with curiosity and admiration upon the unbroken meadows of the lowlands, and being only saved from the error of conceiving of the whole country as treeless by the recollection of the Haagsche Bosch, through which he passed in drives out from the Hague, or of the Middagten Allee, which with unusual enterprise he may have discovered near Arnhem.

Much of the timber in Holland is young, grown for an immediate market, but much of it also is old and stately. From Utrecht to Arnhem there is a great belt of trees that almost keep true the saying that a squirrel can go between them without touching ground. All along this line, by Zeist, Doorn, Amerongen, Reenen, Wageningen, the southern borders of the Veluwe, ranged far above the Rhine and the Betuwe beyond, one finds splendid wood, avenues of beech and fir and lime which it would be difficult to match elsewhere.

And when we push farther north and east we come to woods more extensive still. In Utrecht Province, within sight of the Dom, to go no farther afield, you can walk for miles along ant-run, sandy tracks, between fragrant pines, and through close-set young firs, glimmering grey, veiling as with smoke the green beyond, or lie knee-deep in the heather in a great waste with no living thing near save the screaming hei-tuters.

The inhabitants of the neighbouring meadow lands, so an old writer tells us, used to go to 't Gooi, that odd little hilly corner of North Holland that faces the Zuider Zee without any help from dikes, to see its beautiful variety of landscape. "In the valleys between the heather-clad hills are fertile fields, some sown, some mown, some covered with the white buckwheat blossoms like a sea of milk; from the highest hills we see in one glance the Zuider Zee, the low Waterland, the blue

Veluwe, moorland fields, meadows, and woods:" so he describes this pretty, if not fertile corner, to which tax-ridden Amsterdammers are often driven to make their homes.

The blue Veluwe! The sandy Veluwe! Here we have the same variety of scenery as in 't Gooi, but there is more water, the hills are 'higher, and the woods are larger. A thin population lives on a poor agriculture and the cultivation of wood, and where the mossy sheep-sheds shelter under the trees we see those shepherds and those sheep to whom the genius of the painter Mauve was dedicated.

No one who has ever seen them would disparage these genial, bosky high lands, or wonder at the refreshment they give the inhabitants of the neighbouring meadows, who as of old seek them out for their variety of scenery. I have no wish to do so, because for me a subtler beauty, a still finer refreshment of spirit, resides elsewhere in the country: here in the wind- and sea-swept nether islands, for example; over in the luscious meadows of South Holland where the roof-ridges of the *boerderyen*—"island farms" without the "seas of corn"—cut a black pattern into summer afternoon skies behind their pollarded willow screens; down at Loevestein where Maas and Waal celebrate their royal union; in the deeply embowered, uncanny waterland between them and the Lek; on the austerer, still more delicately profiled, Lek itself, with an aspect which Ruysdael fixed for ever in his Wyk-by-Duurstede landscape; in the poetic groves of the glossy, silent-flowing Vecht; in the polders round Workum, say, during the intoxicating gaiety of the hay harvest, meadows which the Frisians will not allow that all Holland else can rival; . . . in that particular intense polder landscape outside Hoorn, which I never saw the equal of for poignant beauty,

meadow and black cattle soaked in passionate gold by the setting sun one night last June. . . .

It comes to this, always, with those who have discovered the beauty of these lowlands: in the vague ecstasy of the recollection we attempt to describe some singular impression of it, only to find ourselves faced with the impossible, so simple and so common to all others are its elements, and so impervious to interpretation the nuances of their admixture in it.

This unity of impression makes it really a mistake to have emphasised, as I have just been doing, a distinction between the east and the west, for in the one scarce less than in the other there is always present the "lowland quality," as it may be called. Even in its landscape, Holland is not two countries or ten, but is one. And the unifying influence cannot be missed. This quality, found everywhere in it, is due to the enchained water, that like a slumbering passion creates an atmosphere which even at its tenderest and most joyous is also charged with something dread and strange.

This element accounts for the skies, and it is of the skylscapes rather than of the landscapes of Holland that one must speak. I wonder will the new science of aeronautics, by charting those regions of immensity, rob us of their glory and mystery—the human mind being prone to run after the petty facts of knowledge—so that we may come to speak of failing to see the sky for the clouds. Everywhere in Holland the field of one's vision is almost wholly claimed by the high overarching sky, which almost invariably, too, mirrors itself in foreground water, reduplicating there its vast and buoyant expanses. And in between these two infinities comes the darker strip of earth, whose low, melancholy lines and foreshortened spaces, gravely silhouetted against

them, invite the 'eye' to search out their profound and cunning values.

Now into this landscape, composed of elements of so extreme a largeness and simplicity, there are introduced innumerable traces of a human occupation. These are not the uglinesses of great industrial communities; and many of them preserve marvellously the secrets of proportion known to the older craftsmen—those, for example, that give lift and spring to architecture,—which we have (the whole world of modern men) so inexplicably lost; and frequently they preserve also the nervous impression of human handiwork. But, on the other hand, they often are only minute and immaterial orderlinesses, the small contrivances of pinched resources and narrow margins, and of men driven by the mere need of the keeping in of life to an ingenuity almost absurd (at least as men now regard such things). They include all the little characteristic things of Holland which the foreigner so often makes trivial by taking them trivially, and that I plead for the single enjoyment of as they fall into the picture quite harmoniously, to enrich it.

Taken by themselves, the little bridges, the little washing places, the wooden shoes, tiles, brasses, painted posts and pots, the bizarre costumes, even the mills and farms sometimes, are just those things which in studio slang would jump out at you and scream. But it is noticeable that the painters of Holland, when, at least, they have been true to their own traditions and not debauched by foreign patrons, never have taken them by themselves. They have never emphasised local peculiarities in the sense in which our painters often have. It is terrifying to think what a collection of Volendam fishermen and orphanage maidens, painfully elaborated, our Tate Gallery would have been had our painters had the opportunities which Dutch masters had and have.

Yet it is scarcely possible to find a local costume depicted with particularity by even a modern Dutch master. And as with the painters so with the landscape itself. The blue of smock and A.P. poles is absorbed in the infinitely grey-green of the whole. All these violences of local colour are smooed in the general tonal effect.

And this, again, there is no need to explain, is due to the all-prevailing element. The Dutch artist, Dr. Jan Veth, whose felicity with the pen could not be surpassed by that of his brush, speaks of Albert Cuyp finding on the lower Maas only, near Dordrecht itself, the happy country where a delicate vapour from the rich marshy lands lies over the meadows, covering them in the morning and in the evening with a peculiar golden veil. But indeed such a delicate vapour, grey when not gold, covers this whole beautiful country, making its landscape a harmonious thing. *Le pays clair et uni*, as M. Mirbeau says happily.

Touching the appearances of Holland, in a last word before leaving them for good, one asks whether they seem to owe anything to a conscious instinct of the inhabitants. There are few signs that the Dutch lower orders have taste or sensibility; there are many of their indelicacy. Yet to say that they lack the first, however copiously they reveal the other, would be much too sweeping a statement; and for the æsthetic enjoyment to be achieved in Holland, they deserve their share of credit, inasmuch as they have the courage of their colours.

However they have arrived at it, the Dutch rustics have the secret of open-air effect: pure, flaming colour (as in their painted houses and carts and barges, or in their costume—how opportune, æsthetically, is the crimson of the fisherman's slops on Scheveningen sands!) con-

trasted with blacks and whites (as in their dark petticoats and breeches, or it may only be their linen caps). This in the open, and with this we have the further contrast of the cool, low-toned Dutch interiors, which only in a little more intimate sense than the landscape spaces without compose Dutch homes.

Holland is grey: for a considerable part of the year very grey, very misty, and very damp. But, on the other hand, the sunshine there, though not plentiful or in itself very fierce, gathers up from the omnipresent waters and reflects a very brilliant vibrant effect; and this, I would suggest, has much to do with the colour sense of the Dutch. The sunshine seems focused to a sharp glittering point, and the whole scene caught acutely, but in miniature, as in a convex mirror.

The landscape of Holland is not a scene to lose yourself in, but rather a scene to bind you—intensive landscape, so to say, borrowing from her agriculture.

Intensive. That is, the quality of Dutch landscape, as indeed it is of Dutch art and Dutch life. While others extend, the Hollanders enclose.

CHAPTER VI

THE COUNTRY AND THE HOME

ONE of my letters recently was from a correspondent in Holland who, speaking of a certain order of school teachers, wrote that "they mostly come from the *nette burgerstand*" (literally, "clean and decent folk"). No native would fail to understand from that their precise social grade.

In Holland, people live in rings, from which they seldom move out, and so become strongly confirmed in their habits and ideals. We are to see how exclusive and singular, in spite of the variety of estate it contains, is the farming class. Equally singular and exclusive is the aristocratic. And in the wide middle class, from whose homes I have sought to construct a typical Dutch interior, there are certain quite definite distinctions.

Owing greatly to the individuality of the towns, Dutch society fails to create a sense of its weight. Indeed it is so small and its influence is so dissipated that really it is not weighty at all. In our narrower, exclusive sense of the word, Society in Holland scarcely exists. That of the Court, located in the Hague, is reported less brilliant than dignified, and as often exhibiting, together with excessive exclusiveness, an oddish quality of reserve. There is an old aristocracy which still preserves names familiar to all from a read-

ing of European history, and there is a new, with historic traditions, mostly patrician, and more local, but not a whit less proud. It would be wrong to believe that these circles are without influence: the highest administrative posts are largely filled from them; but it is right to say that none of them, and indeed no single class in the country, sets a model for all the others. There is certainly no territorial influence in Holland; and how much is thus eliminated from its life we in England are in the best position to imagine.

There is thus no County. Its elements gravitate from the ends of Europe to the Hague after Sint Niklaas for winter gaieties and functions. There is all the year round there a society that in the eyes of the rest of the country fills up an empty life rather emptily. Since Society has a religious cast, Hague dissipations are sometimes works of charity. One must guard against generalisations. All county families, for example, are not to be declared contemptuous or indifferent towards intellectual and cultivated interests because some resemble the *bourgeoisie* (rather than the burghers: a useful distinction) in a love of ease, or at any rate of pleasure. Again, I have heard from English residents at the Hague quaint stories of pride and poverty among the Dutch aristocracy, but they could be matched by others about families in provincial towns who are without any distinction that is not purely local. The foible of a Dutch ell of genealogy is wrongly attributed to the ennobled in particular.

It is difficult to find a definition for the social grade immediately below the gentle. To call it upper-middle class is to be at once too narrow and too wide. It is too narrow, for it has aristocratic elements, and others which, at any rate judged by our standards, would be esteemed "lower-middle." It is, on the other hand, too

wide, for "upper-middle class," again by our standards, admits many who would be barred out from it for want of the requisite culture.

"Middle class," when I come to think of it, is not a distinction I have ever heard made in Holland itself; it is not one that appears to be recognised by those whom it properly defines. They talk of the *armelui* (*arme-lieden* or "poor people") and the *burgerlui* ("artisans") and the *winkeliers* ("shopkeepers"), and the *nette burgerstand*, and of the *parvenus*. I have also noticed the fashion among them to affect a little disdain of the *adelstand* (nobility), though not all are free from the desire to mix with its members, and many mothers among them regard a Jonkheer as quite a desirable son-in-law. For their own wide class between there does not seem to be any term in general use. Grades in it are suggested among themselves by such everyday phrases as *goede familie* and *deftige familie*. I thought I had penetrated to the exact subtle sense of *deftige*, as of something entirely *fit*; only to find that it has resigned that distinguished meaning for nothing less vulgar than our own "carriage people." Far be it from a foreigner to imagine all that a *goede familie* is in Holland, but at least it implies a sound burgher ancestry, with education and some cultivation among its possessions. At the same time, though there still remains a pride in the burgherly estate, the name betokens often the characteristics of a *bourgeoisie*: it is not a compliment to any one, for example, to say that he has the "burgher manner."

The effect of all this upon the social life of the country is one, not of severalty, but of singular unity. This is not difficult to explain. The independence of the towns enormously complicates the machinery of the national life, but it brings little diversity into its pattern.

The assertiveness of the local rights appears out of all relation to the rights themselves,—often ludicrously so ; and to the foreigner it is the same with the assertion of individual rights: he is for ever in Holland asking himself, “Wherefor all this to-do?” Severally, all seem to be claiming and asserting the same comparatively unessential thing ; and further, it is the same thing as has been pressed from time immemorial. But while this is so in detail, the sum of its effect is the persistence throughout the whole country of old habits and customs, and especially of a characteristic way of looking out upon life.

It seems to be that for human nature there are only two alternatives: you must cultivate an imperfect sense of proportion in the persistent, often rather curmudgeonish assertion of all rights, or drift to general compromise through the repeated perception that this particular right is not, really, after all, one which it is worth while to assert. The smallness of their country, their history, the physical conditions in which they live, and the prodigious obstinacy of their nature these produced, have driven the Hollanders upon the first alternative; and the rather unexpected result of their almost molestive individuality has been the conservation in a remarkable singleness of the peculiar conditions that can only be described as Dutch.

And that is why, throughout this book, when seeking typical conditions, we turn to the various middle classes which have this at least in common, that they all preserve this “something Dutch.”

If woman in them seems unusually preoccupied with housewifely duties—and Mr. Chailley Bert, most acute observer of the Dutch Indies, remarks this as her chief characteristic even when she settles in the East—it is largely because these have not the rivals for her

attention which are so conspicuous among ourselves. There are many friendly dinner-parties, some dances, a ball or two given by the military or the students. Occasionally she and her husband go to the theatre, and probably they are subscribers to a series of concerts, at which perhaps Mr. Mengelberg conducts. But she is still only beginning to take her part in public life. She does not canvass for votes. She does not mob Cabinet Ministers. There is for her no Regent Street and no Club, and if she plays Bridge at all, it certainly is not with her own sex and in the afternoon. Politics, the Church, the excitements of sport, even the pleasures of shopping, enter little into her life.

There is not, for example, our widely spread and organised interest in Missions.

So far as I know, Dutch missionary effort is confined to the Colonies: only once, I may say, have I encountered a lay family in Holland who were sympathetic, and could impart any information whatever about it. There must be many who can, of course, since more than a dozen bodies (including the Salvation Army, at one time despised but now curiously influential) direct the work, expending on it about £100,000. By general report, the Roman Catholics are at present most successful, particularly among the Eurasians, and even they are active mainly in education, employing, I am assured, Protestant teachers in their schools.

It is significant that until recently the fields of missionary effort have been the outlying possessions. Officially encouraged nowhere, in Java itself missionaries were actively opposed. So far as the public indifference to the religious instruction of the natives can be distinguished from that towards the Archipelago generally, the explanation of it lies in the policy of the Government, who,

champions at home of the "neutral" school, steadily set their faces against any form of proselytism abroad. Whether or not the Church acquiesced therein, it certainly has failed to foster in the nation any religious missionary zeal.

Except among the Orthodox, the brightly awakened sense of responsibility for the native to-day has a humanitarian, not a religious, cast. Among the civilised—the phrase as used in Holland indicates an amount of school learning the absence of which leaves nine-tenths and more of our population among the savages—the idea of seeking to convert a Mohammedan is regarded as ludicrous, and an impertinence. (Medical missions are another matter.) Those who do not deride are mostly indifferent. In the classes we are studying, Missions are a quite negligible interest.

Not so Philanthropy; yet the Church by rejecting woman from all its offices excludes her from official charities.

There is no Poor Tax in Holland. One does not wonder that the country has been unwilling to relinquish its system, the honourable traditions of which are known to all men, of entrusting the care of the needy and destitute to ecclesiastical bodies and the private conscience. The Poor Law, which came into force half a century ago, declares in its preamble that charity is a moral, not a civil, duty. Thus it preserved the ancient usage, but it has been less successful in its other aim of co-ordinating the threefold efforts of the State, the Churches, and private benefactors. There is confusion and overlapping among them. The attempt to enforce the registration of all benevolent institutions has failed: it seems, indeed, to have been abandoned; and no man or Minister knows exactly the existing material out of which a reorganised system must be fashioned.



IN THE CITY ORPHANAGE, AMSTERDAM

The Churches perform their charities liberally and well. They perform them picturesquely also: I am thinking of the quaint costumes of the orphanages and the reposeful beauties of the almshouses. But of course their favours, and indeed their duty, are for their own poor. I have been amused to find how, with an eye to future mercies, dissenters among the lower classes (who include indifferents, socialists, and even anarchists) will have their children baptized in the church they have repudiated. The Dutch are a people of long views. It would also appear that the Church's charity, though always acceptable, is not very popular, at any rate in the villages. The Church bodies there are composed of the neighbours, before whom, accordingly, a family's poverty stands exposed.

There was a diverting scandal recently in a village I know. The charity accounts were lodged, as was customary, for a month with the schoolmaster, for public inspection. He is a piece of very special Dutch cross-grain, and used the accounts in the arithmetical exercises of his scholars. In this way the fitches of bacon and the contributions towards the rent charitably dispensed throughout the village became flying rumours. The sequel is too comical and illuminating to be missed. The clergyman took courage—the Teacher's Bond is not lightly to be defied—to summon the teacher before a Church council. And there an elder, intervening with heavy reprimand, had the tables turned upon him by the offender with charges of excessive attachment to *jenever*.

To those who know the capacity of Dutch women, it is almost incredible that it is scarcely ever enlisted in this office of charity. Yet I saw it stated on good authority the other day that of the thousands employed in Holland in Poor Relief only fifty-two are women, and

that thirty-three out of the thirty-eight Church bodies (let the reader mark the last figure) do not seek their aid at all.

Women have of recent years entered actively upon social works. There are sewing classes and mothers' classes, and into all the efforts for the amelioration of the condition of the poor, known generally as Toynbee-work, such institutions as Ons-Huis seek to introduce science and training. But amateur philanthropy on a great scale, as with us, is not known. There has never been a fashion of slumming. The woman of the middle classes may be a lady of Charity, but she still dispenses it acceptably at her own gates.

The daughters of good families who take up nursing as a profession are still generally engaged in the private hospitals, like the Nursing Home in the Prinsengracht in Amsterdam. Some of these institutions are large and notable, and often they are very religious. The nurses in the Lutheran Diakonessenhuis, for example, are almost like nuns in their strictness. The training of the nurses in the public or municipal hospitals generally begins after they are twenty, and lasts three years, with an examination at the end of them for the White Cross. The maternity and neurotic certificates require a further year of study. Salaries, like most salaries in the country, are small. Matrons of the first class are paid £50 a year; those in the second, £33: staff nurses receive £25; certificated nurses, £20, 16s. 8d.; and probationers begin with £12, 10s. The cleaning of the wards is done partly by the nurses and partly by maids. All the public hospitals take paying and non-paying patients, the maximum charge for the former being as a rule 2s. 6d. a day. It is often much higher in the private homes. Neurotic patients in the *Burger Ziekenhuis* at Amsterdam pay from 11s. 8d. to £1, and 4s. 2d. is the cheapest of

the three classes accepted at the Diakonessenhuis of the Netherlands Church there.

I have said already that the Dutch lady does not know the daily distractions of a Regent Street. It is not part of her domestic routine to replenish the store-room herself from the town. She is the less tempted forth to do shopping that, though small shops are innumerable, such large ones as do exist still lack the art of advertising the fact. This is even true of provincial capitals, though Arnhem notably, and perhaps Utrecht, are exceptions. The Groningen lady tells you that she buys most of her things in "Holland," which means the Leidschestraat and the Kalverstraat in the capital, and the Wagenstraat and the Lange Pooten in the Hague. For most ladies throughout Holland a day's shopping is a day in Amsterdam.

There appears here one of the minor anomalies. It is in this country so little given to display that you can feel the pulse of the world's prodigality. All its diamonds are cut in Amsterdam. Within her singel there is a fair-sized Jewish town depending on the industry. Holland keeps a few hundred pounds' worth of the stones, and exports the remainder to the amount of millions. Is there war in South Africa, or a higher duty, or a crisis on the bourses in the United States? Then the flashiness of the Serphati street fades away, and the crowds dwindle in the Mille Colonnees and the Café de Kroon.

If we turn next to manly diversions and interests outside the house, it is difficult to think of any except work. I shall be reminded of the Dutchman's newly developed craze for football, but he keeps that for Sunday. There are tennis and rowing—pastimes of his youth. If he is a Rotterdammer he is possibly a sailor to his old age. The carnival of the ice he enjoys with his whole

household. The pleasures of the chase he seldom knows. Frequently he regards them with a disapproving humanitarian eye, which I suggest he might turn upon the gasping fish and wriggling eels in the waterless tanks of his markets. In a word, it is not for sport that he deserts his hearth—if we may speak of hearths in a country of stoves.

It is by their side that he conducts his politics, which largely consist of damning the Government, especially if it is "Clerical." Beside them, too, he does the work of such of the innumerable bonds, societies, unions, companies, public, private, and semi-public, as he happens to be a member of. I must not be led, when enforcing the private life of Holland, to forget her long, honourable record of public service. Her citizens have always been found ready to serve the State as well as their communes voluntarily and well. Mr. Matthew Arnold, in calling attention to the admirable organisation of school inspection, observed that it was the more wonderful since some of the best work done by the inspectors was unpaid, "following a practice not rare in Holland, where the public service is esteemed highly honourable, and where the number of persons able and willing to take part in it is greater than in any other country." I should not endorse these last words in respect of Holland to-day, if purely voluntary service be meant, but if they refer as well to public work done for a trifling honorarium, they are as true as ever they were.

Besides municipal work of all kinds common to all countries, there is in Holland the whole special business of polder government. Legislation, again, is creating fresh commissions yearly—for Health, Workmen's Compensation, the Protection of Children, and the like. The Poor Relief of the Churches, we have seen, occupies thousands; and there are the innumerable lay philanthropic societies,

of which the *Société de Bien Public* and the *Société de Bienfaisance* are of world-wide fame. Schools of all kinds, Agricultural, Trade, Infant, Continuation, Household, special branches of the elaborate system of public instruction, require their boards of supervision. So, of course, do the *diakonessenhuizen* and the hospitals. The Netherlands Tourist Bond may almost be counted a public institution. There is a commission for the commutation of the Teinds.¹ Perhaps the passion for association is best indicated by saying that there are no fewer than two thousand agricultural bonds and societies throughout Holland. All this work, partly paid, partly unpaid, about some of which we are to hear more, engages lay leisure.

It falls within this chapter to speak of the Dutchman's love of the country, or at any rate of being in the open air. Alliteration only accounts for our phrase "house and home" finding its equivalent in his "*huis en hof*" (house and garden); but we are reminded for how much the garden counted in the life of his forefathers, as depicted in picture and poem: not only the little *hofje* behind the house, but also the garden farther off, with perhaps its summer-house on the water, or even in it, "like a stone bottle in a cooling vat" (the old *klugskén*, the surviving *koepel*), in the upper room of which to entertain neighbours was the good old Holland style. Yet one does not think of these old Dutchmen as being breathed upon by the rural Pan. They took most kindly to the town. They were cits. And so, off the land, are their successors to-day, who have only exchanged the stoep for the veranda, and have their gardens and their summer-places, and love to drive or cycle out to the woods and the dunes, where some *uitspanning* receives them in a country that is exceeding restful.

¹ The Tithes.

It is in the open air of the street and square that many Dutchmen now, as in olden times, spend their leisure. No doubt to-day, as then, they are sent forth from small houses. "I got all my education on the *brink*" (the square of Guelders) we read one of them saying, and so, it appears, it was even with the de Witts. If the present Dutch boy does not learn much on the street, it is not because he does not give himself the opportunity, as many strangers have painfully observed. They may not have remarked at the same time how few schools have playgrounds. And no doubt, in a land where life changes so little, the old boy to-day can say with a seventeenth-century writer that on the streets he can see all the games that he used to play there himself.

None the less, it remains generally true that the men of the middle classes allow few interests to tempt them forth from their homes after the day's work. The day's work, however, takes a long time to do. It is begun early and is finished late. The Dutch peasant is out in the fields and gardens with the sun, and after the mid-day siesta does not leave them until it goes down. The Dutch workman is at his bench or forge or in his factory for twelve hours a day, with short intervals, most often six days in the week. Persons in Holland who keep moderate hours possibly have the idea that shops never shut. It was customary until recently for Rotterdam merchants to go back to their offices after dining; some still do so; and all over the country the lights, I have noticed, burn late in the bureaus in the town and the business rooms of private houses.

Holland is still a country of long hours. It enjoys the compensation of being a country of little strain. Those able to judge by experience all assure us that work is not put through at anything like our high speed.

As against long hours of work, most men spend their daytime leisure, as well as that of the evening, in their own homes. And whether as the result of this or not, the interests, the worries and successes, of their workaday life are shared by the whole household more intimately than among ourselves. The vague ideas of many British and American women about what their menkind "do" in the city is impossible in Holland, and, if it were, would not be tolerated. Dutch fathers keep an eye on their sons-in-law. And the Dutch woman takes very good care to know for herself.

Among my impressions of ten years ago was one according to which her house was the Dutch woman's only concern. To make his home comfortable for her husband was her chief end in life, and so eminently did she succeed, notwithstanding she often shared his failing for mistaking the means for the end, that he was never happy out of it. Her affectionate care cajoled him from his ambitions. He had no sport, no golf, to steel him against the insidious softness. Thus woman's triumph was complete. Without putting a foot in his realm, she enticed him into hers, and though the law calls the husband the head of the household, it could not make any one save the wife the head of the house.

This opinion, that there is an excessive influence of women in Holland, finds me still not quite repentant, although extended observation has shown that even in a society where husbands and wives live and holiday too invariably in each other's company, masculine wit makes occasion for release from an over-great domesticity. A remark of Mrs. Lepel might guide one to the daring explanation that in Holland, where men marry their habits long before they are forty, they marry their wives at the same time, and these take good care to top the list.

Among the educated classes the Dutch woman is,

with all her shining domestic virtues, so uniformly soundly instructed, as compared with women in most other countries, that foreigners have often credited Dutch women with a greater cleverness than their menkind. My suggestion is that these foreigners have seldom met Dutch men outside woman's sphere, where she rules according to very ancient precept largely through gastronomy. And it is not under such subjection that men's wits are at their brightest. Without surmising that, like Amelia Farrel, the Dutch woman escapes bondage through having grown out of her looks, one may opine that she depends as much upon her accomplishments as upon a display of physical attractions. The most erroneous figure for her, however, would be that of a Deborah with a Lapidoth (as they say in Holland) for a husband. Dutch law and custom countenances no prophetesses, and if in the upper classes woman's influence, direct and indirect, is great, it is by the right of her education and intelligence, and wholly without legal sanction.

A woman in Holland may be married "with" or "without community of goods," but only a special marriage contract dispossesses the husband of his wife's own belongings. No contract can entrust to her the handling of property without his knowledge and consent: she may not, without it, alienate or even pawn goods, or receive them or a payment for them, or give a discharge. If she trades on her own account she requires, though married without community of goods, his assistance before going to law. She cannot be the executor of the estate of a deceased person; or, without her husband's consent, a guardian or co-guardian, trustee or co-trustee, or in any case be party to a legal contract, except as regards work.

Unless the marriage contract determines otherwise,

the fruits and income of the wife's goods belong to the husband; he can even, without her consent, and in spite of her desire to the contrary, take the salary or pension she has herself earned, except when she has done so under a contract for work. Although the couple are married in community of goods, the husband may sell, alienate, or mortgage these goods without consulting the wife. Should a wife seek divorce, until it is granted the disposal of all she has contributed during the marriage, and even of any properties she may inherit during the progress of the suit, lies with the husband.

It is only in the event of action being taken under the new Children's Law that "parental" authority does not, in reality, reside with the father. He can deprive the wife of the child she is nursing. He alone determines where the children shall reside, and controls their bodily and spiritual education. He can have them brought up in a religious belief distasteful to the mother. In a word, as says Mrs. Anna Polak, to whose works I am indebted for this list of woman's disabilities, the only mother in Holland who has a legal right in her child is the mother out of wedlock.

One meets all shades of opinion in the country on Woman's Suffrage, with the greatest amount of indifference at the top and especially at the bottom of the citizen estate. With the boers, I should say, it is no question at all. The feminist movement, in its two main lines of Woman's Work and Woman's Suffrage, is directed, like all others in Holland, through innumerable societies, linked and independent. A National Society and a National Bureau make their special care the finding of employment of women and their guidance; while a National Committee, with several sub-committees, keep an eye upon the interests of woman's work, especially in respect of projected legislation. A more general body,

the National Woman's Council, linking up, a little loosely, some thirty unions with thirty thousand members, represents the whole range of effort for the amelioration of women's lot, except that of the Roman Catholics and the Socialists. It is significant that it has declared for Woman's Suffrage.

CHAPTER VII

THE COUNTRY AND THE HOME (*continued*)

“YOU must not forget, we are a very small country.” This unresigned yet dispassionate phrase drops as frequently from Dutch lips as the consciousness of a tradition peeps out in Dutch bearing. Both reminders are just. The characteristics of the Dutch are those of a small people with a great past. The diminutiveness of Holland’s scale must be set against the weight of her living traditions.

The country is only twice the size of Yorkshire (if it is that), and not a third so large as Cuba. The longest direct line across it can be covered comfortably in a Civil Servant’s day. From Amsterdam you can reach any of its frontiers in the hours devoted to a morning’s milking and cheese-making. For all, as we have seen, that its populations are closely packed, they do not number a sixth of the people of England alone.

So we are told by the guide-books; but Holland is a great deal smaller than that. Her whole population is exceeded in Greater London. The strangers within London’s gates would fill her largest cities. It is not the inconsiderableness of her area and people that weighs; it is the smallness of the scale by which she is to be measured in every respect—her reach, her content, her opportunities. It is that which matters to Dutchmen.

How much it matters to them is shown, I think, by the attitude of those who leave her, never to return; or of those who, like the Indians, returning, congregate in towns, which they make cosmopolitan by their efforts to recover in them the bigger world they have renounced. Like a "free Fries," who settles amid the comparatively ampler opportunities of Holland, but carries with him there a demonstrative love of his own Province (to the dubious delectation of his new neighbours), unwistful Dutch exiles of our acquaintance preserve and proclaim a passion for the country to which they yet avow no eagerness to return. Their patriotism is incorruptible. I believe that to no Dutchman out of Holland is there any country to compare with her, or one so worthy of a man's pride. And yet—the dread of the inquisitorial and antiquated way of life of a small country overcomes their nostalgia. The enlarged air of big populations is irresistible, and I am not sure that small nationalities have not more to fear from that than from all the armaments of powerful and jealous neighbours.

It is not easy to estimate the diminishing effect upon the country's scale of a language which no foreigner takes the trouble to learn; or to admire too much the resolution of the Dutch in counteracting it. Polyglot for very life, they have compelled for themselves the gift of tongues, and so enter upon their contests in the world with unusually bright and serviceable armour,—but think of the effort and strain of fashioning it and of keeping it polished! Business houses in Rotterdam, I am assured on excellent authority, can always at a day's notice restaff their offices with native clerks who are competent correspondents in English, French, and German. They can find as many with Italian and Spanish also as they require. Russian has been taught in the

Commercial School ever since ten students asked for it, and as soon as ten applicants for Japanese appear—at this moment there are, I believe, only eight—a professor of that language will be engaged.

Beside this evidence of organised effort I should like to place a chance experience of my own. In a Dutch country inn, a village “pub,” where I passed a night last spring, I fell into talk with a quick, sandy, mousing little chap, thin and keen. He was a saddler, he told me, and had a brother in London, a tailor in Whitechapel, with whom he once spent four weeks, living apparently in Rowton Houses. I saw that he invited my further attention through the landlord, and played a game of billiards with him as an excuse for a talk; and he spoke much better in my tongue than I did in his.

Here was a man who was at work at six in the morning and worked on until seven or eight at night; for seventeen and sixpence a week; and lived in a Rowton House, and saw most of the sights of London from it; and with nothing to gain made a determined effort to learn English, and did it! He went home after our game, and returned with a little pious story-book published (by Mr. Murray, I believe) in 1820, on which it seemed he practised his English; and he produced also a shred of a nursery wall-paper, with an illustrated snatch of song which puzzled him. It was the old “Where are you going, my pretty maid?” and the last line stumped him, and no wonder: “Nobody *axed* you, Sir, she said.” I should have been sorry to have had anybody overhear my efforts to explain that *axed*, but he was eminently satisfied apparently. He was at least mightily pleased with himself, and later, when I strolled round the square before turning in, I recognised his voice across it as he went off with

some companions, still in discourse—I doubt not friendly: he beat me at billiards also—about the *Engelschman*.

This matter of language in Holland has many curious and some unique aspects. The acquisition of foreign tongues, for which I have heard many Dutchmen disclaim praise, so imperative is it, is of sufficiently long standing to have become a tradition among them, like the handling of cotton among the people of Lancashire. The remarkably methodical development of it in the last decade is easy, being founded on a gift. German and English, reflecting the rival influences in Holland's own material development—German, generally speaking, in science, English in commerce—are chiefly pushed; but French is still the customary second tongue.

The sensitive, instinctive patriotism of the Dutch guards their language, even as it preserves their individuality, often by uncomfortably assertive manifestations. The vehicle of a classic literature closed to the outer world, it has never received from them more jealous attention than at this moment. There exists, too, that living literature which no living country ever fails to produce. But there, also, observers perceive the contest of forces. A burgherly tradition, lodged deep in the people, resists an exotic and world influence. It does so even in the hearts of the artists themselves, who have a deeply sympathetic consciousness of the spirit I call "something Dutch," but in their work seem to strain it out in an essence too rare for popular appreciation.

The Beurs in Amsterdam, designed by Mr. Berlage, with its beautiful reposeful lines, is explained as constructed round the very marrow of old Dutch architecture; but the plain Hollander does not see this in it, and indeed almost

universally scoffs at it as a very ugly as well as inadequate building. In the same way the new writers, the admiration of the initiated, are not read by the mass. As in all countries, perhaps, they keep too conscious an eye upon their artistry, and too subservient an eye upon the elect. And all this might no doubt be summed up by saying that the Dutch, like their neighbours, await the coming of a genius who will compel, as for example the war in South Africa compelled, a unity in the national ideals.

It has also to be remarked, as a result of a language in which so few read, that literature in Holland is not a profitable profession. For reasons not wholly selfish, though often doctrinaire enough, Holland has not signed the Berne Convention; it is known, however, that she will do so before many months are passed, and the possession of copyright may enhance literary fortunes. But even with its aid, no one in Holland could hope to live by his Dutch pen. Except the editors-in-chief of the more important newspapers and magazines, whose salaries probably vary between £300 and £1000, few journalists can do so. Most others have the support of their reserves, great or small. A popular success in fiction is a sale of a first edition of from a thousand to fifteen hundred copies, and from three to five thousand of a cheap edition later. Serial publication of novels and stories is remunerated at varying rates, from two guineas to six or seven, not as with ourselves per thousand words, but for every five thousand; that of general popular literature, sometimes at six guineas, sometimes at as little as two, per sheet of sixteen pages.

This example of the restriction of Holland's scope due to language introduces another, wholly arising out of its smallness, and sustained by very honourable tradition.

The opportunities of amassing wealth are few. Great fortunes are made in business—in petroleum and tobacco still, for example—but rarely; and the incomes of most Dutchmen are, as compared with those of Englishmen, pitifully small. A millionaire among them is a man possessed of a million guilders—a little over £83,000, and there are about five hundred such in all. There are only one thousand rich with 40,000 guineas. There are not ten thousand, at any rate, paying the Capital tax (*vermogens belasting*) on £6000; seventy per cent. of those paying it are taxed on less than £4000; not one among every ten income-tax payers has a capital of more than a hundred guilders to be charged upon.

The reader will bear in mind that these are the revelations of tax-papers; only let me add that the tax-gatherer in Holland is said to be a ferret. Keeping this in view, let us look at the figures of the other part of the income-tax collection, which are still more remarkable. This tax (*bedryfs belasting*) is imposed on the practice of trades and professions, and involves some 400,000 inhabitants. Over seventy-five per cent. of these are assessed at an annual income of less than £125, over forty per cent. of less than £65; and the percentage, of course, is higher if we do not include the *rentiers* with very small earnings. There are only 60,000 persons in all Holland shown with earned incomes between £125 and £500; 19,000 with between £250 and £500; no more than 7500 with more than £500.

Inaccurate as these figures necessarily are, they illustrate the point I wish to make now. Some of the moderate fortunes used to be, at any rate, and no doubt still are, held by the farmers, and farmers do not pay *bedryfs belasting*; the profits of their labours are con-

sidered too uncertain, and the risks to their crops too great. Set against this relief is the cost of polder upkeep, which falls upon the land, that nearest the dike paying a larger proportion than that farther inland. It is the great merchants, again, who make the great incomes. Consider, then, the simple, even straitened lives that the middle classes must lead, many of whom, on the income of a handsomely paid London mechanic, seem to surround themselves with a certain grave and cultivated comfort.

I do not imagine how they do it. In all the necessities of life, Holland is as dear as England. Rents are not lower. Yet there seems to be no doubt about figures which suggest a further speculation: 4000 students at the universities, and only 7000 householders earning over £500. There could scarcely be figures more startling or more illuminative.

In some private business undertakings—banks and commercial houses—I know of salaries of from £400 to £900 paid to men who have made themselves indispensable, as far as any man can. The average is probably £150. A Cabinet Minister gets £1000; a lieutenant-general in the army, £525; a naval officer of the equivalent rank, a little more; a judge, £250; the Headmaster of a Higher-burgher school, £210 to £275; a Professor at the University, £415; high officials in the Postal and Telegraph service, a little over £200. From these plums of the professions we can judge the ordinary fare.

I think I am justified in saying that there is not to be imagined a more honourable trait shown among any people than that exhibited by this body of men in Holland, arduously equipped, as we shall see, some of them of splendid talents, some even acknowledged leaders in the sciences and the professions, who give

their services to their country—or, if you like, are content with a living in it—on the earnings of one of our young buyers in the City.

Let us look next at services of another kind which Dutchmen give to their country. A small, purely voluntary force of 10,000 men is enlisted among them for the colonies, which with native troops brings up the army of the Indies to 35,000 men. The system of military service was purged about ten years ago of *remplacement*, and now one in every three youths who have entered upon their twentieth year is drawn by lot for the army; each commune contributing a maximum levy according to population. The period of service is only eight months, and extraordinary care is given to the health and education of the conscript. This makes him costly, and invites still another grumble from a tax-burdened people; but in reality the service is widely approved in the country, on account of the physical training it involves as well as of a sympathy between members of different classes—too rare in Holland—which it engenders.

I cannot write here, of course, of Dutch schemes of defence, except to say that the large sums spent and contemplated for fortifications are not to be taken as indicating a change in the pacific attitude of the nation. Whatever his Governments may do, the individual Dutchman is a fierce anti-militarist. The services still evoke no enthusiasm in him. The profession of Arms is not popular, and no one can say that it is profitable. The navy is less favoured than the army: the sea fails singularly to fill the imaginative horizons of the landward Dutch, and even of those who live within sight and sound of it. A Dreadnought on the stocks at Amsterdam excites little attention; yet I believe that popular feeling would be moved by a flotilla of boats capable of re-

peating the Water-beggars' tactics, even as, with a sound instinct, it turns for security still to flooding for defence. For Dutch martial sentiment is a reminiscence rather than a tradition. I cast no doubt or aspersion upon the patriotic feeling of the Hollander, knowing well how ardent it is; but in a situation of danger and dependence he builds his hope and faith mainly, I believe, upon the self-interest of his neighbours, and when one opens with him, as the Briton invariably does, — upon Holland's imminent danger from the swelling desires of Germany, he slyly answers that as a matter of fact the lust of which he is fearful blows up rather from across the North Sea.

Other and less lovely phases of Dutch life revolve into view now. It is impossible to avoid saying, since so many Hollanders themselves declare it, that their country is considerably busybodying and not a little censorious. But this it only to repeat that it is a small place.

The habit of curiosity is engrained in all human nature that is worth considering: next to a fight, gossip is what it loves. Everywhere it makes the most of its opportunities, and it is evident how especially plentiful these are among a close-set, concentrated, material, materials-loving, and, in the backwaters, still an etiquette-ridden people. In the country the stranger often finds it embarrassing. In Amsterdam — curious, thrang, leisurly Amsterdam — it is only amusing, for the stranger. It is often remarked that one can attract the attention of a crowd at a moment's notice in London, but in London I witnessed a little incident, really I think the most appalling I ever saw, so revealing was it of the callous self-centredness we may all fall or have fallen into. It was in Queen Victoria Street, just opposite Mudies'. A man slipped and fell on the

pavement in a heap in front of an advancing pedestrian. And he, lifting a foot a little higher, stepped over the impediment he saw but never looked down at, and stalked on without a break in his march or his self-absorption. Well, the discomforts of the small place are cheaply bought in the avoidance of the inhuman strain that can produce a scene like that!

The upper, or rather the educated classes—that is the distinction in Holland—mitigate these discomforts, as I have already indicated, by a practised reserve. There is, however, another form of busyboding from which they have not found relief. All Holland is over-regulated. The Law strikes one as just, and its administration as exceedingly humane, but the police-regulations seem rather a pest, because intolerably enforced. The restrictions upon the coming and going of life are many. The passion for laying down and posting up what you may do and what you may not do, and generally for ordering life for all men, is well recognised as a nuisance by many Hollanders, who can only console themselves with the reflection that it is nothing to what is going on in Germany.

The Dutch official can sometimes, however, put the telescope to his blind eye, as this true story illustrates. A friend of mine, wishing to take his boy with him into the Ryks Museum, was stopped at the door by a demand for the boy's age.

"Eleven."

"Can't take in children under twelve."

"But there," said my friend, pointing to a group that had just passed in: "there's a baby in arms!"

"True," was the answer, "but they are saying it's thirteen."

I do not find the Dutch manifesting any awe of their officials. They are at least always criticising them.

The police have notoriously failed to establish authority. An altered attitude towards them can be remarked in Rotterdam recently, helped possibly by the introduction of a very smart-looking mounted force. But in Amsterdam the policeman is still the butt of the populace. Possibly the unfortunate man's pay does not enable him, in spite of sword and helmet, to present an appearance for respect. He slouches. His hands are generally in his greatcoat pockets. His toes turn in. He frequently smokes his cigar on duty. He always seems to me to look a little shivery. And when you do see him active—as a rule in a back street or up a lane—it often appears to be, as the Amsterdammers declare, on trifling inquisitorial duty. But the Amsterdammers are a difficult people. And there is, of course, another side to the case. Their policeman is hanged already, having been given a bad name.

Critical the Dutch certainly are, and sometimes, it may be, censorious. They have not always learned to be "soople" in things immaterial. In great cities and among large populations, men are taught, or teach themselves, to be accommodating; but in Holland they are permitted to practise a surly independence. Village humours, at any rate, often issue from this characteristic. A burgomaster in a commune in the country is called upon continually to intervene in disputes over water-butts, and the like. If not water-butts, then things as trivial occasion quarrels in our own and all countrysides; but in Holland the feud is followed with a peculiarly native tenacity. The champions will not let each other alone, but tease and taunt, sometimes even issuing covert offensive menaces in the advertising columns of the local sheet.

The church organist (who is likewise the schoolmaster) in a village which I know, possesses a pew which is always

empty, for his household never by any chance wait upon religious observances. One Sunday a lady who arrived late slipped into this pew instead of pressing forward to her own. The organist glared at her all through the sermon from his loft, instead of, as usual, reading his newspaper (sometimes he smokes his cigar the while); and rushing home without playing the voluntary, addressed a letter to the offender, which he got delivered before her return, reminding her that that particular pew was his property, not any late-comer's.

I ought to say that the village which still enjoys the services of this genial creature lies over the Yssel, towards the German frontier, a region pointed at by the true Hollander for its rude population. And I am assured by a friend who has lived long in Germany that the characteristics this and similar tales indicate are exactly paralleled in village life there. But it is not over the Yssel only that there occur rudeness and licence in the assertion of personal rights. Authenticated cases of insubordination in public departments are notorious in Holland, in which the culprits have found widespread support; whereas among ourselves, impertinences and defiance like theirs would have put them out of court instantaneously, and, whatever their rights, they would have been packed about their business, with the approval of the whole community. This rude and unruly spirit, which is growing, is indeed singularly in contrast with the graciousness of the "civilised" classes, and I mention it here because it seems to show that the excessive regulation of life prevents the growth of a controlling public opinion such as comes by making the masses responsible for themselves.

The Dutch do not require each other very much—or so it seems. They are, in spite of what I have said about their constant contact with one another, a little

remote in their own homes, a little remote in their own skins. With all their tolerance, they are not always very good at tolerating. At least they are not very good at sympathising. Perhaps one ought to qualify this still further, and say that the circle of their sympathies is not particularly wide, even as the circle of their intimates is not. Many of them have told me that they found the fewness of friends, still more the large number of acquaintances, the surprising thing in English (no doubt they meant London) life. At home they cultivate the first, and rather discourage the other.

There are indeed in Holland few occasions (though they become more frequent) for acquaintanceships in amusement only. Such, Charlotte Brönte opined, not too profoundly, do not lead to liking as do those in work, and perhaps in suffering. But they do lead to sympathies and understanding among men who have no other opportunities of working or suffering together than are afforded by a lost round at golf, with a ball a corner thrown in. And they widen the knowledge of human nature, which in Holland is not always conspicuous.

But enough, and more than enough, of elements which are, after all, merely trifling disagreeable expressions of a strong and noble personality. The Dutch are not adepts in "the science of honeyed suasion." Their bluntness, and an uncompromising, sometimes rude, stand upon immaterial rights, are native to a race whose assertion of their character and ideals, in the face of the odds of circumstance, has the virtue of high courage.

And even more intimate to them is the quality that accounts for the excessive regulation they impose upon their life—I mean the craftsman spirit, which delights in doing a thing thoroughly, for its own sake, even if it be

only "making a plan." Ironical as it may appear, after the evidences of a certain unruliness which we have just been seeing, the instinct for orderliness is shown in every aspect of existence in Holland. It is the Dutchman's second nature, or rather it is his first. It is bred in his bone. For since the day there was a Holland, the Hollander has been centering and plumbing, and squaring and confining, and finding levels, for his life. I have often thought, as I watched him busy in the same preoccupations to-day, setting his whole existence four-square, that were he to find the "folly of his delight," would not his punishment be a "melancholy metamorphosis" back to his original wastes and wanderings?

Dutch existence is the very honeycomb of order. I have noted its precision in accounts which several travellers observed three hundred years ago. It is the same with records and statistics. The tabulating passion of a Hague official has often made the labours of this book a little exhausting, and tempted me ungraciously to follow Pallet in blessing myself from the courtesy of a Dutchman, and praying to heaven for deliverance. Not in the public bureaus only, but in those of private enterprise as well, this reduction of enlightenment to the terms of figures is going on. When I was in the Westland the other day, and visited the experimental garden at Naaldwijk, I found electro-culture on trial,—it is exactly what one would expect to find on trial in Holland,—and punctually received a report, with the results (and a thousand others) elaborately set forth. And earlier in the same day, on a great grape-growing garden belonging to a private company, I had been told of similar experiments, on a still greater scale; and I was shown (in flimsy duplicate, which by some quirk of association give them a greater impressiveness in my eyes) the records of every

greenhouse, almost of every vine-branch, tabulated with a fascinating precision.

Whether for business more was necessary than a rule-of-thumb achievement of the information that an electric current flowing round vines does not add to the market value of their grape produce—the English way—is open to question. Clearly what differentiates the two methods, ours and the Westland's, is its more general interest in possible scientific aids; but I think that there must also be added a Dutch instinct for the formal and precise, which is often most unpractical. In everyday living this race of craftsmen are (so to say) in love with their medium.

Instinct and training exalt the value of exact information in the Dutchman's eyes, and they also incline him to seek it wheresoever it is to be found embodied in orderly devices. Thus each statistician issues his patient tabulations, secure in an audience appreciating and delighting in his expertness. A map is not only valuable because of its configurations; it creates an interest in configurations which can be so lucidly mapped. Reports on drainage-levels and on peach-culture indiscriminately attach to drains and to peaches the attention of a man who knows nothing about either, but can himself tell how badly a report can be, how well this report has been, prepared. Thus is, as it were, completed a circle of craftsmanship, in a country where order, the inspiration of the crafts, is also the very breath of life.

In this somewhat fanciful way I seek to explain the Dutchman's faith in the expert, and his patience under official regulation. It suggests also how the Dutchman's local pride often comes to be fed by the interest which he takes in his country's activities. None of them, we have seen, lie very far from his own door. He

can inspect them for himself. The expert kept on hand, more likely the body of experts, is ready to welcome him with information, and to speed his return with more, much more. And in the expressed essences of all this garnered knowledge, dropped into the conversation of the family circle, the country is brought into the house.

CHAPTER VIII

DUTCH HOURS: MORNING IN THE SQUARE

IT seems to me, if I begin to grope among my memories of the round of the clock here in Holland, that when I fall asleep in that country it is always to the "*konkd-k!*" of a bucket on brick and the "*gulp-t!*" of a pump in the village square.

For the eternal fetching and carrying of water, that ceases not with the midnight hour, there is an explanation, if not a good reason; and so there may be for the special Dutch brand of warning-metal on train and steam-tram to which one's ears seem to open with one's eyes to daybreak here.

I must not say "always," indeed, for does there not linger in my ear still the sound of *O-VER!*—that beautiful ferry-call of Holland, cheerful in spite of its minor key—which used to come floating in across the classic waters of the Vecht, carrying in its note something of the mother-of-pearl quality of the morning landscape?

Water, I have already said, is not laid on in all houses in the towns, and never (or seldom) is in houses in the country. That is why I shall have so small—so very small—a portion of hot water handed in by Rika a few minutes hence, and why the pump here in the square creaks and groans night and day.

So, too, in a flat land like this, where the permanent way is all one level-crossing, and the steam-tram is for

ever nearly pulping somebody against the limes as it swings round its tracks in village streets, *Reglement Artikel* No. 000 is perhaps justified in providing for the damnable iteration of those automatic clappers. (It must be a great satisfaction to the Dutch to know so precisely the clauses of the Code in which are mentioned the many things they must do and the many more that they may not.) But why is it that a warning must always partake of the sinister character of the danger anticipated? Pleasant sounds would be equally arresting. I am sure that the chimes of Leyden striking up on a country road would surprise me into removing myself from under an approaching steam-tram as certainly as that horror-freezing clang.

It is a particular square that I am thinking of, one that you could identify, but could not find although I named it, for it is just this moment rechristened, and is now the one-hundred-and-first "Juliana Plein" of my acquaintance. Besides, their names apart, these pleins, like all other things Dutch, seem very much alike, and require long knowing before they reveal their subtle individuality. Indeed, Holland is really composed of infinite variations upon one or two themes, and its people are so many unmistakable individuals all engaged in a common business. "A Dutchman," said an old traveller, "always wishes to know which way the wind blows: for he is often either miller, sailor, waterman, or merchant." And that is still another reason, I suggest, for the singular unity of impression which Holland leaves with one, and of the satisfaction that, like everything with unity, it gives.

For ministering to the wakeful or the bright awakening hour there is no bookshelf at hand; and books, in fact, do not greatly contribute to the furnishing of any Dutch rooms, except perhaps Mynheer's study, where the

choice is not very eclectic. It represents his profession rather than his taste,—look, however! that is half a row of French works down there. Mynheer, I may say, is a great admirer of our social and political institutions, but has a very poor opinion of the English novel. But in deploring the absence of the bedbook I am rather putting myself in the position of the native guest. Is it not every one's experience, even the slugardliest's, that he has little inclination to lie abed in a strange country? Our minds, as everybody is aware, work for their own health, apart from us (whoever we may be who give them body-room), anticipating for themselves the interests and satisfactions of the coming day. And how delightful to obey their invitation, and look down through the spring tracery upon this square here—spacious itself, yet overshadowed by the church, which with its pastorie and school, and Old Men and Women Almshouses, and all its other increments and offshoots overflowing into a second side of the plein, suggests that in this land Geneva matches Rome by sheer ongoingness and weight of possession.

But it is with some difficulty probably that you look out and down upon all these. Holland is damp; and at the same time the sun reflects fiercely from the canal. Therefore the jalousies are drawn down outside the windows, and inside there are blinds over them, and again curtains over the blinds; the same remedy employed against hot and cold at once, as with the countryman in *Æsop's* fable. All of them can be worked up or down or aside by an apparatus that is most ingenious, I am sure, and doubtless most simple for those who understand such things. But for me who am not mechanical they are difficulties in the way of achieving the morning view.

Already, however, before I am done with these

cordages, have braced the jealousies, taken a turn of the curtain and paid out a bit of the running-tackle of the blind—why the devil does that beautiful little copper block always jam!—before the whole is made shipshape and Maassluis-fashion, I have got some indication of the day. The sound of wooden shoes below is a kind of barometer. It tells you the season, and in a general way the state of the weather. It tells you, at any rate, the state of the roads, for if they are muddy it is "*klo-ough! klo-ough! klo-ough!*" as the sole sinks, and the soft clay muffles the "*klick*," just a touch, of shoe on shoe at every third step or so, which makes the cheery summer music of sabots on hard dry roads—"*kloemp! kloemp! kloemp - te - kloemp! . . . te-kloemp!*"—that sounds all over Holland. How that music comes back in memories of long, hot summer afternoons, when all else in the world is still, its cadence mounting, then falling away, in the lane behind the walnut tree in the garden.

I have got to detect a diminution of the interval between the rainy-day "*klo-oughs*" when the owner hurries up—sign of a particularly heavy downpour. I dare say if one lived long enough here he could recognise footsteps. Wood can surely index occupation and temper and temperament as well as leather. Why should not a peasant in sabots show the cloven hoof like the dude in pumps who is always doing it in the novels? Dress has much to do with the sound of these shoes. If you wear clogs with narrow garments, like Japanese women you must take short, shuffling steps! The big-breeched, wide-petticoated Dutch have a long, shuffling gait, and both their body- and their feet-wear suit their occupations. That is the first rule of costume. Costume lingers among those who have to "lay their way to their winnings." Dress changes from day to day with those



A MAKER OF WOODEN SHOES

who can suit their occupation to the cut of their skirts or the pattern of their uppers.

The *klomp* survives in Holland because it is indispensable. Comfortable, accommodating, warm in winter, cool in summer, it is everybody's wear on the land. It is nobody's wear in the house. When the boer takes off his wooden shoes in the notary's hall, he is only following his own custom at home. There are always rows of them, plain, carved, soiled, scrubbed, white-washed, or picked out in black—along the *gang* of the village houses, and outside the doors of the farms at the siesta hour. And in larger, smarter houses as well, and in town as well as in country. Mynheer puts them on when he is going to cross his plashing meadow, or visit his greenhouses or his stable. Mevrouw slips her feet into them when she has her chickens to feed. And her other chickens, in *their* run, they wear them, and wear them out!

Now that they are bitten with the football craze, street gamins have taken to practise dribbling on stray corks and rotten apples in wooden shoes—a disconcerting exercise for the unsporting passenger. Innumerable are the uses of the *klomp*. To slay your rival with. To drop toll into. To drink out of (I have seen it). And, setting his on toe against the garden wall, the boy mounts on the heel and thus adds nine inches to his stature towards the overhanging cherry boughs.

Some of the maids, I see (now that I can survey the square), have shod themselves with wood for the morning's swabbing. I wonder if any of them were roused out of their sleep by a *porder*? He (or she: Justus van Maurik's, I think, was a "Mietje") has the calling up of the domestics, by tugging at a cord attached to a bell in their chamber and hanging down in front of the house. But, mark you! not so far down that the enterprising

boy can get at it; therefore until nightfall it is looped high on a nail, where few strangers remark it. In most places, indeed, it and the *porder* himself exist looped on a peg of memory only: do the maids also still observe there the compact and get up?

This, as I have said many times before, is a marvellous country for survivals. It gives no occupation for "the oldest inhabitant." Perhaps you think that the Watch is long extinct in Europe? The *klepper*, let me tell you, "occurred" (as the observers of strange birds say) in Utrecht within this decade. And I can send you to a village in South Holland where you will find him yet picking his way, if not by the light of his lantern, at any rate to the sound of his rattle under your window, and calling up to you the hour o' the night: "*De klok heeft tien — tien heeft de klok!*" and all's well.

Here, at any rate, are the maids, up and out, and busy on stoep and pavement with pail and mop and *glazen-spuut*. If they do not possess the last, which is just a large brass squirt for sending the water sluicing about the window panes and the outside window shutters, they make a cup or a wooden ladle serve instead. See them at work splashing in all directions; or industriously bent over their red and green pails, blue or heliotrope wrappers uniformly tucked up, rather ungainly ankles as uniformly displayed in loose white cotton stockings. Much of the work, which in England is done at the back of the house, where open windows, flying rugs and mats are a melancholy disfigurement, or that isn't done at all, is carried on in Holland in the public street. Or, rather, in public, on the private parts of the street, for all above high-water mark (the old gutter) is the possession of the owners of the houses. That is why you have these breaks: different elevations, alternating

flags and clinkers, which make walking on Dutch pavements uncomfortable.

As for walking on the cobbles—Oh! that wearisome Smedery-straat in Deventer, the far end of which they have discovered to be the true centre of the town, and the proper place therefore for the post office. Yet I would not have missed its hardships, for was it not there that I discovered a tip-cat sewn in flannel, the gem of my collection of Dutch curios!

All the washing and swabbing and brushing and beating of rugs and carpets out there will soon be over, for it must cease at a given hour if the police regulations are obeyed, not to be renewed until late in the night. Too much is made of it, and of the cleaning and scrubbing and polishing indoors, both by the indefatigable natives themselves and by the quizzical strangers who observe them at it.

Too much is certainly made of it by the natives. There are wonderful stories told, all of which I am quite prepared to believe. I never, it is true, saw a servant holding up an umbrella while washing the front of her house. But the other night—it was in Arnhem—returning to my hotel in a violent thunderstorm, and passing through the square with my head down against the deluge as the clock struck ten, I was made to jump by clap after clap that caused the dust to fly out of the pavement at my feet. Then I saw that it was only a muscular vrouw beating her rug on the wall as I passed. Carpets can be beaten after 10 p.m. Ten p.m. has struck. Therefore, though the heavens fall, out and beat your carpets! That evidently was the logic of this monomaniac.

Hers is a monomania, but so is the curiosity of certain travellers who make straight for Broek in Waterland.

"Marken?" says the guide on the Dam.

"I guess it's either Marken or that lovely little place where they tie up their cow's tail," says the lady with the Kodak.

What fearful wildfowl must not some of their visitors appear to these grave hydro-Hollanders!

Broek is just a very clean village, a slight exaggeration of innumerable clean villages in Holland. They tell us the inhabitants might with advantage turn their mops and *glazen-spuiten* upon themselves. Well, if every youth in England who talks about tubbing were to tub, the water-rates would rise.

I am amused with the speculation that the obsession which produces these clean villages is only a confirmation in long tradition. Servants, I read, quarrelled over the gutters and the keeping of the *klinkers* bright, and housewives were judged by the polish on bell and knocker, a hundred or two years ago; and long before that, twelve months' service in keeping clean the streets and quays was the price a stranger paid for his citizenship in Utrecht.

The Dutch bedroom is a bed-room, not a boudoir. In picturesque Holland it is not a bedroom at all, but a cupboard or press in the wall of a living room, into which you ascend by a ladder; and being keen on the track of survivals we may account in this way for the highness of even modern beds in modernly appointed Dutch houses.

In old Dutch pictures we can see in front of the beds footstools, *scabellekens*, by means of which better-class sixteenth-century citizens mounted to beds à la Duchesse which sometimes stand on raised platforms. These footstools are said to be precursors of the *stoof*, perhaps the most distinctive piece of Dutch furniture. Foot-stoves were more than *mignons des dames*, as Roemer Visscher

calls them, though in the Jan Steens and Metzus they play the rôle of elegant toys in my lady's boudoir. The newer fashion is round, and of mahogany; it seems scarcely necessary to describe it. The inside is lined with zinc, and within is a *test*, or stone basin, green or brown; in this glowing peat is placed, the fumes from which issue through holes at the top.

"A vestal turf, enshrined in earthen-ware,
Fumes through the loopholes of a wooden square."

In olden days, I recall from prints, the clergyman's wife going to church was preceded by her maid, carrying her stove more consequentially even than her gold-clasped Bible; and the congregation also supplied themselves with these aids to cordial worship, as they do still. The Dutch (like John Wesley) do not see why the devil should have all the comforts.

These box-beds in the fisher houses in Marken and Volendam, and in the peasant cottages at Laren, for example, are much gazed at by tourists, who might have seen them nearer home had they been enterprising enough to visit the Volendams and Markens and Larens in their own country. But in them there would be missing the bed-cord, by which you can raise yourself from the mattress; and if it is in an Overijssel kitchen you are sleeping—an old *lossehuis*—there is a little glass window in the partition at the side of your bed through which you can look into the byres, and see that all is well with the beasts in their stalls.

Under or at the foot of these box-beds may be discovered the cots of the newest child, or children; as I have seen the cradle, or *koets*, on a ledge at the foot of a peasant's bed on the Lek. And to this day people who retire to a well-picked and well-aired mattress in a *lit-jumeau* or the more intimate recesses of a carved and

curtained or brocaded four-poster, will still say, "*Ik ga naar myn koets.*"

Beds à la Duchesse, with their surrounding curtains and imposing canopy, were for comfort and modesty. Holland has a trying climate and also a rather prying population. Bedrooms, as I have said, are never reception rooms. The ribbed Spanish matting on the floors of many of them stings the tender sole and braces the luxurious body to speedy descent to the day's work awaiting. And Holland with its Spartan rule may not even delay you by an early cup of tea in them. Their furnishing keeps strictly in view their use as sleeping-rooms. Such mirrors as there are hang a little inaccessible, which may have something to do with my lady in Holland wearing the hair always in the same mode, and not dressing and stuffing it out with each new hat. Bedrooms are comfortable, but scarce luxurious; between comfort and luxury Dutch custom is careful to distinguish. And very sensibly those who sleep in the house regularly are given the first choice. The "best bedroom" is in nightly use. The guest chamber is not generally selected for situation or furnishing (though the fairest room in the house will be yielded up willingly sometimes to the stranger). The Dutch themselves are not much given to the custom of staying overnight in one another's houses, partly because of the ease with which in so small a country their own can be reached at the end of a day's visit, but still more because of their love of their own home and its comforts.

All this I am recording of a house at the heart of Old Holland, which will soon be rare, while smart houses will be common until they too have become the *oude mode*. Here no gong summons to breakfast. Nine is the breakfast hour, and the clock in the hall, cuckooing nine times, bids us descend.

CHAPTER IX

DUTCH HOURS: FORENOON IN THE *HUISKAMER*

THE Dutch breakfast is not French, and it is still less English, and possibly, being something of a compromise, it lacks the charm of either.

To tea and coffee and roll are added the egg and the plate of *rook-vleesch*, the inevitable cheese—fair keb-buck in its palace of glass—and honey-cake which is called the *ontbyt-koek*. Dishes which are the particular glory of the English breakfast may be found where they lunch at one and dine at seven or half-past; here I speak of the simple *ontbyt*, to be followed by the equally simple coffee-drinking (the *tweede ontbyt*) at noon, on which in plain and modest households (the adjectives are for their charm, not their social rank) the Dutch start the serious labours of the day.

Served in the *huiskamer*, it is a meal for the round table, particular symbol of the family circle. No servants wait. The viands are a little uncomfortably overflowing. Mevrouw cooks the eggs in a net (but this is a departing fashion) in a tea-kettle at her side, or fishes them out from the boiling water with the massive *eierlepel*, which the irreverent Scots boy likens to a niblick. This adds to her business over her china, and as milk as well as tea is drunk, tumblers as well as cups crowd the board.

The breakfasters take time to thaw. It may happen to folks in any country to rise off their wrong sides.

Here, as everywhere, man displays the taciturnity of the morning hour, and the selfishness of the first meal of the day which people work through with little concern for their neighbours' entertainment. Mynheer reading his *Rotterdammer* or the *Telegraaf* recites to an unedified household the news that interests himself alone. There is the scramble which with us goes on a little more circumspectly about the dumb-waiter. And should the sun shine and the veranda doors be drawn, and the morning tempt you out among the flower-beds between the cups of tea, there is no breach of the family manners if you yield. So the family eats its informal *ontbyt* as, literally, a running meal. And by and bye the men folks disperse.

They do not, however, so generally as with ourselves, disperse to reappear no more until the end of the day. The end of the day, in an ample sense, is the dinner. Towards that noble issue all its hours labour. With that achieved, Holland sits back in comfortable and complaisant ease, drinking tea. The men, toying abstemiously with a second *déjeuner*, inform themselves of the menu in store. Like Trice in the play, they love to have the satisfaction of the day before them. Now in very many Dutch households still, the dinner hour is as early as five or half-past, which means an early return home of the male. But very frequently he has never left it. This house in the square, the type of that "something of good old Dutch" which matches most closely the "something of good old Scots" that Carlyle praised, is the modest, well-ordered contained town-house of the professional man; and in it, we have seen, the professional man frequently does his day's work. If it calls him forth to the bureau, the *stadhuis*, the university, the gymnasium, the courts, the casern, he returns to drink coffee; and here he is back again at five o'clock to dine, and as often as not to digest his dinner in the *salon* or

his own study. He is, at any rate, always "about the house," and every woman is aware how even the knowledge that he may be there modifies the day's economy. She has to reckon with his presence in the ordering of her hours, which we must now observe her doing.

The one immediately following *ontbyt* is occupied by Mevrouw in "washing away the breakfast things." It is the invariable custom in the Holland here pictured for the lady of the house to do this with her own hands, a daughter possibly assisting, as Marie is doing now. Except for the one beside the kitchener, there is no hot-water tap in the house. The basin of hot water is as handy in the *huiskamer* as in the kitchen. So Mevrouw and Marie rinse the cups and tumblers, and wash with the little mop the saucers and plates, at the table on which they have been used; replace the bread and *koek* in their green enamel boxes, and in time have them all away in the sideboard or in that cupboard in the wall, which, since the door is papered like the rest of the room, is only to be detected by its tell-tale key and glass handle.

This custom, observed as most often customs are after the reason for them is vanished, and even forgotten, signalises the Dutch housewife's care for her plenishing, which was rare as well as ample. I dare say there are changed ways with the changed days. But no change in Holland has brought about that state of things, truly horrible in Dutch eyes, which compels the housewife in London, by the steady and heart-breaking experiences of London servants, and dust and laundries and London wear-and-tear generally, to buy cheap things and let them rip. I am sure that among the little tragedies of many a woman's life in English middle-class households, none is more common than this sacrifice of the treasures of her first furnishing, and of her ideals of preserving them in the sanctity of the sentiment associated with

that. In Holland that sentiment survives more or less throughout her life, with the material objects which embody it.

The irksomeness of this Dutch hour, if it is ever felt, is relieved by its cheerful bustle. Truitje—the maids are called by their Christian names—announces that the *groente-boer* is at the door. If the stranger is curious, and will peep out of the *voorkamer* window, he will see a greengrocer's cart, with a dog in the shafts, and piles of vegetables, fresh cut from the market-gardens beyond the town.

Cart of Holland's Plenty! Long and low and laden, altar for the daily sacrifice to the Goddess of Abundance! between whose shafts the panting guardian lolls a vermilion tongue among his muzzle-thongs! Fruits of Pomona's garden, increase of Ter Aar and Beverwyk, vegetables garnered by careful husbandry in the Beemster and the Streek, and by the torpid waters of the Vecht, all in their season: *Molsla, brusselschlof, asperges, spinazie, zuring, doperwtjes, peultjes, capucyners, postelein, peterselie, worteltjes, slaboontjes, snyboontjes, komkommers, grooteboonen, bloemkool, roodekool, wittekool, savooiekool, boerekool, andyvie, and schorseneeren, bieten, spruitjes, knolrapen, raapstelen, seldery, knollen, augurken, pry*; all juicy and succulent within these hard rinds of vocables. What visions are awakened by thy green amplitude! Of gardens from Limburg to the Langedyk, where the blunt toes of ten thousand sabots brush the dews of morning from leguminous verdure.

Meanwhile a sample basket drawn from the piles on the cart may have been brought in for Mevrouw's inspection. There follows a little cloud of criticism, a flutter of calculation in cents running into *dubbeltjes*, and Truitje goes forth to complete a bargain at the door. That business is done for the day.

Follows the butcher, bringing his book in its green tin case so that Madame may enter her order and keep fingers unsoiled. Then come the milk boer, the baker, the grocer, all, most likely, paid at the door by Truitje out of the *ryksdaalder* given out to her overnight; which when the morning traffic in the hall is over, leads to a balancing between her and her mistress of the meticulous entries on her kitchen slate. The butcher is paid twice a year. A good many households, however, especially in the large towns, get most of their provisions from *Eigen Hulp*, the greatest of the co-operative societies in Holland. I have been told that quite half the families in the Hague are supplied with bread and groceries from it or *De Hoop* or *De Volharding*.

Mevrouw goes to her storeroom to give out the day's requirements, and to make good the gaps in it. Marie now sets forth shopping, at the confectioner's (*banket bakker*), the poultryman's, the delicatessen-handel, whose wares (in the German version) Londoners know through the enterprise of Mr. Appenrodt. There is the fishmonger also to visit, if Mynheer does not consider that his duty, for the fishmonger's live-tanks at the door in the morning held only flounders and eels, no cod or salmon or oysters.

When Mevrouw by and bye descends into the garden, I follow her there, to pursue, if I may, some inquiries into domestic budgets. I fear myself just a little in disgrace with her still over an incident of the breakfast table. You have heard earlier of the Dutch linen cupboard. Be warned by me, and do not touch it flippantly in talk with your hostess, especially if she be one of the older school.

Sacred are these snow-white piles, products for that great occasion—how many years ago?—of a certain

hand-loom of Brabant, and placed beside others still older of Almelo and Emden, the strong and close and fine, saved from fore-mothers' times, for the trousseaux of sons as well as of daughters.

Well, this morning, deceived by a slight levity displayed by her family, and missing the awe in her voice as she spoke of it, I said—

“M—— tells me it took his aunt two years to do the round of her linen-cupboard.”

“Ho!” says monsieur, cocking an eye towards her over his paper, “*myn vrouw* has been doing nothing else for the last twenty!”

Whereupon *myn vrouw*, who is a little fiery, and tenacious withal, declared she would invite none to inspect her treasures, and so far has not done so.

I have therefore to approach her a little humbly for the information I desire.

Touching the budgets of which I entice her discourse, I may say that there are only two items in them wherein I see an undoubted saving in Holland as against ourselves at home. The first of these is education. The other is personal service, which is cheaper in Holland, where also people do with less of it, and so avoid one of the great obstacles to economising when the need of economising arises. In simple professional households two maids only are as a rule employed, or three if the family is large, and entertains.

Here all the children but one are out of the nursery; while the others remained in it (a condition we have seen that is not to be interpreted too literally), a third maid was kept specially for their care. Now they are in charge of a “juffrouw.” In addition, the husband has a male servitor, who usually comes in daily, and for part of the day only, and fulfils all the offices from a valet to a barrister's clerk. The cook, *Mevrouw* tells me, is

paid £12, 10s. a year; and the housemaid, £9. The first is a usual wage for a juffrouw also. In recording these payments, however, it is necessary to point out that this is a household such as is found in provincial towns; the capital towns, like the Hague and like Amsterdam, have a scale of their own in these matters. Our country towns, then, and not, of course, London, must supply the just comparison with Mevrouw's figures. There is still another condition to be mentioned. The scale of living in Holland is certainly rising. "Establishments" are on the increase. The cost of service will therefore increase in many budgets, owing to an enhanced number of servants, even if the market-rate for these does not rise, which as a matter of fact it is now doing. None the less, in comparison with those paid in England, all wages are less.

In noting the wages above, no allowance has been made for presents, stipulated for, or tacitly assumed on both sides. Thus at the kermis (whenever it falls or fell), and again at New Year, each domestic servant receives a percentage of her wages, generally a twentieth. In this way the cook, who nominally is to receive £10, can count upon £11. New-Year gifts are extended also to the lamplighter (who used to present in return a poem of inordinate length), the watchman, the tradespeople, and the police. One custom in respect of the servants may be mentioned. If her cook or her housemaid abstains from wishing her a happy new year, the mistress is intended to take this formal inattention in lieu of notice.

These kermis and New-Year gifts, however, do not exhaust the "tips" upon which the Dutch domestic servant reckons in engaging herself. The discounts allowed by tradespeople are recognised perquisites of the servants: so much so that if on occasion the lady

of the house settles the bill, the discount is handed to her with the request that it be passed on to the maids. Very early travellers in Holland are found complaining of "the guilder tip at dinner," which survives still. It used to be that when you ate you paid. It may be that even yet some older-fashioned folk slip a kwartje or two into the hands of cook or maid on departing from "coffee-drinking," but it is not customary. But if the occasion be more formal, with a hot lunch, and always after dining, even with intimates and relations, the opportunity must be seized, in homely fashion by a visit to the kitchen, in formal at the hall-door, of tipping the guilder. You would not in Holland ride away from a line of grinning faces if like the Fife laird you merely tickled for the domestic the palm you were supposed to be oiling. I cannot imagine the Dutch servant seeing the joke of having the "loof kittled" only. Such a proceeding would be a breach of faith, involving the mistress as well, for which, consequently, a second occasion would certainly not be granted you.

For there is no false sentiment in the matter. Generally those tips are put into a common box, to be shared in recognised proportions later, sometimes under the direction of the lady of the house. She, in negotiating about the engagement of a maid, is expected to intimate the approximate amount of the perquisites (*verval*) which her entertainments bring into the common box, and possibly acquiesces in the maid's stipulation that it shall be made up to a stated sum. "*Veel verval*" ("many tips") often occurs in advertisements for servants. A wedding feast in the household is a happy windfall for the kitchen, as it brings to it a big tip from departing bride and bridegroom. The florin also passes to your friend's coachman, when you enjoy a drive with her; and I may

mention that to men-servants fall also the benefit of the *draag-plaatsen* at a funeral.

These bearers' places are still filled in some districts: a few weeks ago in the church at Workum I saw a set of old guild litters which have been in use for the last one hundred and fifty years. There are, if I remember rightly, seven of them, decorated with paintings illustrative of the estate or occupation of those whom they are destined to carry to their last retirement: boers, ironmongers, joiners, great skippers, doctors, the children of sailors, the children of farmers. Sixteen men act as bearers, and another sixteen toll the bell, when the body is borne to the churchyard.

Even where bearers are no longer employed, the perquisites of their places are distributed. I remember one friend's coachman receiving fl. 10 in this way. These funeral pomps are truly, as St. Augustine said, more consolations to the living than benefits to the dead.

But here is Marie back from the town. The table is again set. Sideboard and cupboard and their tin boxes have made delivery afresh of their wares. Mynheer appears, clapping impatient hands on the veranda.

It is time for coffee-drinking.

CHAPTER X

DUTCH HOURS : A RAMBLE AFTER COFFEE-DRINKING

THE noonday meal in this house, as I have already remarked, is only a second déjeuner, simple like the first. A hot dish may appear at it, a pasty, on occasion a bottle of wine. For my special benefit there has been procured this morning a dish of eels, from which, unfortunately, I, being Scotch, have a native aversion. There follow regrets ; even, I fancy, a slight reproach, and a pity for such lamentable lack of taste. For the Dutch rather pride themselves as possessing the true *smaak*. But coffee is the drink, and bread and butter and milk and cheese the body of the meal. By one o'clock it is over.

De Amicis, who wrote so delightfully of Holland, justly praises the Dutch cheese, "wherein," he says, "when once you thrust your knife you can never leave off until you have excavated the whole, while desire still hovers over the shell." The visitor to Holland will do well not to let his enthusiasm run to these depths. Our Dutch hostess here would not be over-well pleased to see her kebbuck dug into ; and though she would not utter it, or think it, the old Dutch saying might be at the back of her mind : "*Die myn kaas snydt als een schuit, die jaag ik myn deur uit :*" whoso cuts my cheese like a boat, him I send out of my house. If De Amicis'

enthusiasm was aroused by recollections of a soft-pressed Gouda (as my own advises me), he ought to have sliced it long and very wafery. Taste in cheeses varies with each household. Here they have hard Gouda, and a still harder Leyden, green, with caraway seeds, but not so green as Texel (sheep's milk, I think), into the colouring and flavouring of which I am recommended not to probe.

Willem, the eldest boy, left early, on his cycle (of course) for the gymnasium in the neighbouring town, and will not return until the evening. He always lunches with good friends of the family there. But all the other children are here, and with them two cousins who live a mile or two off, and drive (or sleigh, if there is snow) night and morning to and from the Higher-burgher school. How the "boterhams" fly, as they call the fast-disappearing slices of bread and butter! And yet how the eaters talk! There is no repression of youth in Holland, or not, at any rate, in town families; and in consequence one misses those cynical flashes out of his silence with which the public-school cub at home frequently illumines the luncheon conversation of his elders. The system shows to disadvantage, of course, when the parents have let control slip from their hands. And meals are not reposeful. Yet these eager, chattering coffee-drinkers contribute to the happiest recollections of family life in Holland.

On earlier visits paid to such Dutch households, I seem to remember, parents were addressed as papa and mamma by their children, and even by their children-in-law, but now *vader* and *moeder* are in commoner use. Is the reason to be found in another change I observe among the lower classes, of discarding *vader* and *moeder* for papa and mamma? It would be quite characteristic were it so. I have already explained that Republican

Holland is not democratic, and with my hostess's help will employ the peaceful half-hour after coffee-drinking to elaborate this theme.

For all their Republican virtue—because of it possibly—the Dutch are punctilious in the matter of titles. There is neither a Duke (*Hertog*) nor a Marquess (*Markies*) among the ennobled in Holland. The highest title is that of the *Graaf* (Count), whose lady is *Gravin*. After that come the Baron (with his Baroness) and the *Jonkheer* (Baronet), whose lady is known as the *wel Edele Vrouwe*, though among the gentle themselves titles are not in use, and are exacted from inferiors only. Titles multiply for the reason that the father's rank passes to all his children, sons and daughters, at their birth. These are commonly called *Jonker* and *Freule*, but officially they receive their father's, and so have no courtesy, title.

This Society has the reputation of being as exclusive as any in Europe, which does not prevent many outside it besieging its close ring. But that comedy is witnessed only at the Hague. The other cities present their own, where the patrician commoners cultivate a pride as great as the aristocracy, and have the power to support their pretensions. English residents in the cities have remarked to me how few of their many acquaintances they meet at the same houses. And they have told me also strange stories of the affectation, and perhaps the reality, in Hague Society of ignorance of the very existence of its countrymen of world-wide fame—a subtle proof of the obvious fact that a middle class disputes its prerogative.

The prefix *van* is not necessarily a sign of nobility; though there are, I believe, van Somethings in New York who have adopted it under the impression that it is. It denoted neither gentle nor noble blood or birth

in the seventeenth century. Great landowners assumed it with the name of their estates, but so also did the lessee of the estate, or of a part of it. The Dutch *de*, which means not "of" but "the," simply attached to the Christian name or patronymic some identifying nickname or geographical adjective. So did *ter* and *ten*, contractions for "at the" and "by the"; and so did *op* (found in the American Opdyke), which was simply "on." De Haas, De Meyer, De Ruyter are no more aristocratic than Paauw (peacock), Vandervoort (of the ford), or Gansevoort (gooseford). I do not know whether there are any de Schoornsteenvegers left in the United States. If so, their common ancestor was doubtless the early settler we know of on Long Island, Pieter Andriessen de Schoornsteenveger, Peter Anderson the chimney-sweep.

The three Orders for special services which the sovereign at present can bestow are the Military Order of William, the Order of the Netherland Lion, and that of Orange-Nassau. Before a new Order can be instituted a special Act must be passed, and the initiation for such a new Order does not lie with the Chambers. No one can accept or wear a foreign Order without the permission of the sovereign, which I gather from the year-books is given freely; the sovereign and princes (the princes only with his consent) may accept them, if they carry with them no obligations.

The titles accompanying University degrees are stumbling-blocks to the foreigner, or at any rate to the Briton. The degree of Doctor in Literature and Science is recognised by the regular use of Dr.; so is that in the Law, but a practising barrister is Mr. (*Meester*: the French *Maitre*). Thus in writing to holders of these you use the forms: "Den Wel Edelen Zeer Geleerden Heer Dr. Jan Janssen," and "Den Wel Edelen Zeer Gestrengen Heer Mr. Jan Janssen." It is necessary to

make a distinction among medical men. They are all known as *Dokter*; but all have not defended their thesis, and those who have not are distinguished on their name-plates by the title *Arts* (Physician). A clergyman receiving his full recognition will be addressed as *Wel Eerwaarde Zeer Geleerde Heer*. The terms of address, in fact, are a labyrinth which one threads with difficulty, and scarcely with any certainty of complete success. As the stranger will have few opportunities of addressing officials officially, it is only necessary here to mention such forms as "Hoog Wel Edel Gestrenge Heer" and "Zeer Wel Edel Geboren Heer" (which being interpreted literally means "High well-noble-austere Sir" and "Very well-noble-born Sir") as showing some of the high-sounding obstacles to be surmounted, if they are called upon to do so.

The ordinary correspondence of life is simpler. To his intimates plain Jan Janssen is *Waarde Janssen*, and signs himself probably "t.a.t." (*Tout à toi*) J. J.; to his acquaintances, not quite his equal in age, generally *Beste Mynheer Janssen*; to the rest of the world, *Wel Eldele Heer*, or *Waarde Heer*. Women friends give each other their Christian names: "*Lieve Marie*" or "*Beste Marie*." Married women, good acquaintances, may write "*Lieve Mevrouw*" or "*Beste Mevrouw*," and sign themselves *Uw. toegenegene*, scarcely *liefhebbende*: custom tends rather more than less nowadays to reserve. "*Geachte Mevrouw*" ("*Esteemed Madam*") is a more formal address of respect.

In society, familiars use the "thee" and "thou"; there is no hard-and-fast rule, but *je* and *jou* are usual among friends of both sexes. Persons who are older, or not intimates, or to whom it is desired to show special respect, are addressed with *U*. In unflattering Friesland, I understand, children have always used the *je* to their

parents, and this habit appears to be creeping in, with the parents' encouragement, in other provinces. Servants, themselves addressed with *je*, of course use towards their masters and mistresses the more formal second person plural.

In an older time the domestic servant (when not called by her Christian name) was *meisje* (girl) or *vryster* (sweetheart). Now she is *juffrouw* (miss), which suggests an interesting point. The three titles for a married woman are *mevrouw*, *juffrouw*, and *vrouw*. There is even a fourth, *vrouw* with an *e*, *vrouwe*. The distinction is subtle. A lady is *mevrouw* (if she is not *vrouwe*). Between her and the *vrouw*, somewhere, comes the indefinable *juffrouw*. Such at one time was the wife of the clergyman—*juffrouw pastoorsche*, as she was called, in the days, no doubt, when it became her to wear the *kornet*. The unmarried noblewoman—the daughter of a baron or a *jonkheer*—is, we have seen, a *freule*; the unmarried lady-commoner is strictly *juffrouw*. But now that the maid-servant is also *juffrouw*, the young and sensitive daughter of the house, though a commoner, likes to be addressed by tradesmen, and sometimes is by her equals, as *freule*; this is a country where a man, as likely as not, would refuse a title, claiming that his patronymic which had been held in a plain respect for a generation or two required no adornment. But these contrasts in character and conduct jostle one another in Holland continually.

There are, then, titles of ennoblement, and those who claim them are "well-born," when they are addressed—*Wel Edel Geboren*. Outside the gentle birth there are many titles, distinctly defined, punctiliously used, based on a claim that can be defended. And there are some in use for which there is no warrant. There is not, however, so far as I know, anything of the vague nature of our Esquire, or of our Mr. Nor is there any condition, such

as exists with us, where by some social standard a man is addressed as Esquire, and not as Mr., while his wife remains only Mrs. The wife of the "high-learned" and the "strongly learned" Smit is Mevrouw Smit; but then the wife of Smit the tailor is (as we have seen) merely Vrouw Smit.

Family names are not used as Christian names: nobody is called Beaufort Smit. So far as I know the Calvinists of Holland did not, like the Puritans, bestow outrageous Scriptural names upon their children. There are Sybillas, Theodoras, and of course Saras. But I never heard of a *Spring-voor-Glorie-Jans*.

A society with the traditions of the Dutch has naturally retained the plentiful use of nicknames. A soft man is known as a "Jan-salie" (*salie* is sage), and a man who interferes with household affairs a "Jan-hen," which notably explains itself. There is a cake called *janhagel*, a brown, flat, blistered cake, very hard, eaten as a kind of biscuit, and *janhagel* (for some reason I cannot fathom) is a name for the riff-raff. The goody-goody hero of juvenile stories is generally called Joris—again I cannot say why. A clownish fellow (in a funny sense) is Hans Worst. Other Jans are "Jan Vlegel" (John Flail, a boy always up to tricks), "Jan Sul" (clearly a silly), "Jan Rap" (one of the unwashed), "Jan Contrarie," and "Jan Sekuur," which require no explanation; with others, very pithy, which are better not explained. The Dutch "Johnnie," the "Jan," is not exactly our rather dandified fellow-of-the-town, who is better represented by the Dutch "Piet": "the Jan," at any rate, is a likeable, clever "Johnnie." The grosser, boastful type is "een Bram" (Abraham); the wooden fellow "een Klaas" (Nicolas); the brainless fellow "een Stoffel" (Christoffel). A "Lys" (Lisbeth) may be a helpless person of either sex; and a "Tryn" is generally used

with a not particularly complimentary adjective "as a silly Tryn." A "Frans" is generally frolicsome; an "Aagje" is *nieuwsgierig* (inquisitive), like the notorious Aagje of Haarlem.

But now Mevrouw must leave me. Since in the larger towns some old-fashioned households still dine at half-past five or even at five, afternoon calls begin early. By three, seated on her sofa in the *voorkamer*, she will be surrounded by her friends. She is too old-fashioned for the custom of a day-at-home. Hospitality seems to necessitate refreshment. It used to be the glass of port or madeira, but these have mostly disappeared. The fragrant custom of afternoon tea has charmed even Dutch conservatism. Marie, who has gone into the town with some companions, will drink it at the tea-salon, instead of visiting the confectioner's to eat tarts, the refecation of an earlier day.

Mynheer went off after luncheon to do business in the neighbouring big town, and I am to meet him later for a *borrel* at his club there. There is an hour still free for wandering in the street, most exciting of Dutch diversions.

The town crier is preluding an announcement, about baked eels or stewed, or something, by beating on a bright copper plate. He is standing opposite the druggist's, with its sign of the gaping man whose tongue lolls in his red mouth. Farther down the street is another crier, a figure black from toe to crown: shoes, buckles, stockings, knee-breeches, swallow-tail, and peaked cap, from which hangs a long black scarf gathered up over the arm. This is the *aanspreker*. His business is to deliver the cards, which announce a decease, at the addresses on his list. Sometimes he is given no cards, but only a form of notice, which he recites at the door. "Mynheer and Mevrouw — give intimation of the death

of etc. etc.," I heard him the other day in a village shop, as if he were summoning to a hay-roup. And indeed death and auctions seem to be always advertising themselves in Dutch streets, the one by its trappings of woe, and the others by their terrible hubbub.

The grim chariots that bear the Dutch to the grave are driven by coachmen who in some places still wear a *huilebalk* (which is to say, a blubberer),—a black hat, large as a hearse wheel, which they keep from blowing away by a stout black cord in their teeth. Under this doleful canopy they set a pace like a Dopper *voorzanger's*, and so the processions move through the streets leaving trails of depression behind them.

A Dutch auction is not the simple affair it looks in this town fish-market here, where hunkered wives arrest the auctioneer's rapid descent in the scale of cents: *veertien, dertien, twaalf, elf, tien, neg*—Pop! and the flounders are theirs. It is a little more complicated than that. A house, we will say, is put up. Rising bids are made, and there is a premium (or *plok*) for the highest figure. This is taken by a dealer (only dealers are recognised, really, and they settle prices among themselves) who has brought the price of the house (we will suppose) to fl. 5000. At the next stage the auctioneer starts with a margin above 5000—at fl. 8000, say, and the house is knocked down at fl. 6000. But if no bid is received above fl. 5000, the dealer must take it who ran up that price.

The system works in favour of the sale. The premium tempts up the price. Sometimes, of course, the bidder is landed with a thing which he didn't wish, and only bade for because of the *plok*.

Here is a case I heard of. A man commissioned one of the dealers, a *makelaar*, to secure a house for him. He was to make sure of getting it. The price

was run up to fl. 4000. The auctioneer then began at fl. 6000, and the *makelaar* got the house at fl. 4150. He went to the purchaser and told him the house was his, and the cheap price paid for it. "All right," said the other, "but you'll never get a commission from me again. You ought to have bid at the highest figure, fl. 6000. My instructions were to make sure of the purchase, and any one might have cut in above fl. 4000."

On my way to the station I call at the post office. It is like a great many post offices I know in Holland; that is to say, occupies a very fine site, is quite modern, a little new-bricky perhaps, airy, with large windows, built in accordance with the latest Health and Dwellings Acts, and staffed by workmanlike youths in long yellow-white blouses, and capable maidens, whose robes I am not called upon to describe, and a gentleman in black somewhere in the background, who I have no doubt is the very last word in efficiency. As a post office, however, it has one eminent defect. It is closed. These official ladies and gentlemen must eat, possibly repose, about this hour; hence, as I say, it is closed. I think with equanimity of the cramped, wire-screened counter in our grocer's shop at the corner at home, where the manager takes her place when the young lady lunches; and pass on my way reflecting that I am a citizen of a practical country, even if it is one that sometimes only just muddles through.

That is still the burden of my thoughts when I reach the station,—but on the railways, be it admitted, the hand of regulation is less heavily imposed than it used to be. There is nothing to be said against the platform-ticket, which only costs a cent or two. . . .

Here, though it is beside the text, and impertinent, the praise of a small coinage must be sung. Not only a cent they mint at Utrecht, but even a half-cent, which is,

of course, a tenth of a penny, less than half our condemned farthing; yet none in Holland has the ill sense to scorn to pick it up in change. Put a half-cent stamp on an envelope, a calling card within, with p. f. or p. c. in the corner, and your felicitations and your condolences are franked from Helder to Maastricht. Three cents is the inter-town postage for a letter, and the price of Mynheer's customary cigar. And then think how the youthful purchaser, with five cents to spend, rejoices in a vast selection! What a run for his money do they give him in Grietje's shop! It is Grietje's living-room and sleeping as well, flanked by the gang, where she hangs her spare klompen, that leads from the bridge through to the garden. The bed is a bunk. Peat burns in the fireplace. A chest of three drawers is her only store. A table and a chair are its only other furnishing. But the window, the shop! Reels of cotton, toy pistols, caps, bait, rods, hooks (kept in a glass button box), peas, cherries, sweets, eels,—and outside a Scots boy, born chapman from Aberdeen-away, with ten half cents for a deal! This is his account of it, true as it was writ:—

1	Box of caps to go off by stamping on	. ½ Cent
2	Sheets transfers Grietje keeps in her chest (of drawers) I „
	A dobber for fishing in the canal. I am to get the money back if it doesn't bob I „
	A copybook I „
	½ cent pears and apples I „
	½ cent sugar scissors ½ „
	Rotten herring for bait ½ „
	Tottle ½ cent too much

P.S. I let her keep the herring till I went to Tante Hetta for the half cent.

P.P.S. There are one hundred cents in a gilder.

And yet, for all its hundred cents, a "gilder" in this country, I find, goes no farther than does a shilling at home. . . .

The platform-ticket has its points. But it used to be that, having bought the ticket for your journey, you were confined in a waiting-room—a very gorgeous waiting-room if you travelled first or second class—until the arrival of the train. There was an elderly official at Flushing with whom I struck up quite an exciting acquaintance through walking out with my bag in my hand through an injunctioned door. One of my early conflicts with the railway bureaucrats is a painful recollection, for, losing my temper, I speedily converted the rights I stood on into wrongs. On Driebergen platform I dropped my ticket, as I only discovered at the barrier at Utrecht. The airy explanation and offer of my card, which would have franked me at home, produced no effect upon stolid gold braid; as little did the pawky jest, the sarcastic gibe. My ticket? Gold-braid called in a broader band of it for consultation, and finally there appeared one who in the hierarchy of the Netherland-Rhine Railway Company was very exalted indeed. His verdict was: The fare from the terminus, Arnhem, and a dozen guilders or so by way of fine for travelling without a ticket. Preposterous! But in vain I hinted at the no mean country I had condescended from, in vain I booked through his well-born, strongly respected high-mightiness to blazes. Fare and fine were paid with blasphemous demur, and refunded to me later, with compliments, through kindly offices. And I felt small. It is not wise to lose one's temper ever; but to Dutch officialdom, it is folly.

The tryst I am to keep with Mynheer is not at the town house of his club on the market-place, but at its bungalow quarters in a garden on the outskirts. In

Holland the *Societeit*, as the club is called, is nowhere exactly the institution it is among ourselves. There is no club-life in Amsterdam as there is in London, and in the Hague it flourishes with a difference. It is again a question of Holland's scale. When you run up to town—the Residentie town, as they name the Hague—you usually return the same night. Members of Parliament, if they do not rent town houses, have rooms when necessary at a hotel there, or at Scheveningen—the Bellevue, the Oude Doelen, the Hotel des Indes, charming if not cheap. Men do not sleep at their club.

In the Witte Club at the Hague, however, you might think you could look out into Pall Mall. A hospice so free of entertainment for the stranger encourages one to invade its privacy here. It stands upon the Plein, and even overflows into it, for in the afternoon, if the piazza on the pavement is crowded, you take your chairs out among the trees. One may say of this club that it is fed by and feeds the officials of all the Government offices around it. Lunching or dining there, a guest feels that he is privileged to witness the Departmental machine of Holland being stoked.

Yet that is a very ordinary spectacle compared to another which is to be seen at the Witte, and nowhere else in the world perhaps,—a Cabinet symposium. There is a kind of high table at which Ministers drop in for luncheon. There is no dining-room in the Binnenhof, and no bar: in fact, strong drink is warned off all its premises. This informal coffee-drinking accords with the unceremonial dignity that hedges in the Estates. Over in the Chamber, the Speaker, so to call him, wears no robes of office, but appears in our evening garment. Members pass and repass the Chair without obeisance, or chat in the window-seats; this free-and-easy air pervades the lobbies, and the barrier upstairs, where the stranger

is passed to his gallery, is the kind of thing to be looked for at a local Wonderland.

The estate of Royalty itself in this country is free of feudal or ecclesiastical ceremony and trappings. No goldsticks walk backward from the Presence. The Queen drives through the Hague amid a host of bowing heads uncovered to the First Citizen ; and yet the liveries at Het Loo, very Royal against the greenery of Apeldoorn, proclaim her more than that. So there is a Republic and there is a Monarchy, and the sentiment of the people accords with the unique blend.

But here is the club, and the end of these rambles. I enter it with a startled recollection of having been in it before. I remember, now, the occasion. Its cool aspect and shady gardens, contiguous to the highway, attracted me when I was here before, many years ago, and I entered and ordered refreshment, and imbibed and paid for, and tipped for it without a qualm until this moment that the club was anything else than a kind of refined *uitspanning* which we at home might do very well to imitate.

CHAPTER XI

DUTCH HOURS: DINNER

IN Holland, as elsewhere, the hour of dining gets steadily later. The Confederates who founded the Beggar's Order dined at Culemborg House at eleven in the forenoon. It was between twelve and one that Orange came down to dine in the Prinsenhof at Delft on the fatal day of his assassination. The hour had been advanced considerably later in the afternoon a hundred years ago, when travellers told how they went to the theatre in Amsterdam at five, the performance lasting until eleven. Now, there and in the other cities, many dine as late as seven, or even half-past. The custom of living out of town all the year round has brought changes into the old Dutch order in country places also.

Here in the house in the square, however, a quarter-past five sees us all round the table, quite a large family party. The cousins I met at coffee-drinking are back again, for their parents, Mevrouw's sister and her husband, the director of a dairying factory, have been invited over to dine and meet the stranger. The young people are in summer suits and frocks, the elders have made a change of afternoon wear. Our evening garb is still reserved here for great functions, by day or night. I suspect Rika of putting on a black dress and a new muslin cap for the occasion, and being rather enamoured

of her own smartness. It certainly is something novel. A year or two ago she would have had no change for a wrapper, and I overheard a story the other day about a house where a black japon is kept as a "property" for the use of a succession of maids. But Rika is an institution here. Servants in a family like this generally remain long enough to outwear a livery. As for Antje, the cook (who, like Mevrouw, comes from Zwol), she has been with her mistress since her marriage; as sound and as durable as an outset of linen.

My friend's mahogany is spread with linen from Brabant, fine and white, unstarched and unironed; the ample napkin, too, does not slip off one's knees on a glossy side. The silver is solid and plain. Two massive crystal compôte dishes (with ginger and morels on brandy), and a piece or two of good blue, attract the eye. This is one of the few houses where I have seen the *komfoor*, which is sufficiently Dutch to warrant a description. It is indeed only a brazier of peat standing on a little table by Mevrouw's hand, with a perforated nickel top on which dishes, of vegetables say, can be kept warm. Peat at home would smoke and smell, but here it is of the hard kind, that glows to the heart without throwing off disagreeable fumes. These contrivances scarcely add elegance, but they bring a certain comfort to the feast. By the side of each diner is placed a crystal or silver rest for knife and fork, which are carried forward through several courses. The wine is not decanted. A bottle or two already drawn, each with its glass-helmeted cork, stand here and there on the table, like policemen on point duty. Lit by the afternoon sun, it is a cheerful board, though a deft hand perhaps would have made more of the flowers.

Mynheer, out of respect to his brother-in-law, who is

Orthodox, calls upon Sammy, and he responds briskly with "*Heere, zegen deze spyzen en dranken, Amen!*" The meats and drinks to follow are sound and savoury, but temperate enough to make the grace graceful in Elia's ears. There is a vegetable soup, very clear; shrimps served in shells; a rissole of meat, with peas and carrots, young and tender, and small, mealy, yellow potatoes; fowls (a present from a neighbouring farm), a salad (no endives) well beaten and skilfully mixed by the host; and to crown the feast, for the children a magnificent tart, baked by the confectioner, who, like his guild brothers all over Holland, has a light hand for pastry.

The wine is claret, the staple of Dutch cellars. Mynheer, who is something of a connoisseur, discoursed to me on the subject last night. Bordeaux the Dutch understand, he said, as the Belgians Burgundy. But not port. "Be careful of the port in Holland," was his advice, "and watch the brand of the champagne."

Dutch cookery is really very good; a little rich, perhaps: Holland has as many sauces as it has religions. The traveller, dropping in at a good inn in the country about half-past five, is fairly certain to find a well-cooked dinner being served, and sometimes will land at one where the table is superlative. This is explained by the considerable company of unmarried officers and bachelor lawyers and notaries who dine there, night in, night out.

Students and officers frequently have their table at a comestible shop; from which too (and sometimes from the schools of cookery that have sprung up everywhere) are served such as *eten van den kok*,—elderly ladies, perhaps, or others who live in a *bovenhuis* or flat, and keep a daily servant only. "To eat from the cook" is to have your dinner delivered at your house according

to price (a guilder probably), kept warm in the tin cylinder, or *bus*, with its glowing peat, which arouses the curiosity of the stranger who sees it being carried through the street of an evening.

The means often seems inadequate to the success achieved at these public tables. My most recent observations were made in rather a dingy inn, the pick, nevertheless, of a flourishing town. The ordinary guests had probably stayed away, scenting that the occasion, the kermis, would cause the board to blossom with the *bourgeoisie*. Blossom is a misleading word, for the company, a round dozen, drooped and wilted, in spite of the hovering host, who sprinkled and even drenched it with a watery jocularity in his effort to revive it. His dinner really was very good, and deserved a less solemn appreciation. It was followed immediately in an adjoining room by another, a kermis banquet, to which some two score officers (in mufti, by the way) sat down, arising some hours later with benign countenances that advertised the viands. I had an opportunity of indulging my curiosity about ways and means, and discovered that all these appetites had been appeased with very little addition to the usual staff in the brass-bright but rather pokey *souterrain* kitchen.

My greatest surprise was when we took rooms at a grocer's for a week one summer in a Rhineland village. The price seemed high at fifteen shillings per day for two, but the place was something of a fashionable resort on the sand, and Holland anywhere is apt to be dear unless you plan for cheapness, and take the risk of nastiness as well. But dinner the first night brought a better explanation. It was lavish and elaborate, and hints at some curtailment of the dishes, some reduction of their richness, only put the cooks upon their mettle. For Vrouw Vandam, I discovered, though not a bad

hand herself over a stove, had introduced another still more cunning to assist. So in the rotation of that week the dinners waxed in fatness and abundance. The good Vrouw knew her duty, if we did not ours, and sped us on our way with a sense of not being a credit to her establishment.

I rather gathered from her oblique reproaches that the natives whom she received did not fail to do her entertainment justice, and I can believe it. In some circles "good form" begins to demand abstemiousness, but the Dutchman can still be cited as a capable trencherman, though as often an epicure as a gourmand. "Watch Mr. —," whispered a Dutch lady to me once; "doesn't he handle that peach as if he loved it!" and I perceived in his manipulation the delicate, patting touch, the sense of appreciative satisfaction that comes into the voice of Mynheer here, for example, when he becomes reminiscent of choice cuisine.

For downright, solid forkwork, I need seek no farther than Sammy opposite me. Lord, how he plies it! Here is no toying with the instruments of eating.

Now the tart is brought on. "Where are the candles?" cries Zus in dismay, who remembers how at Sammy's birthday party eight of these luminaries upon the pasty signalled his achievement of as many years that day. "This isn't a party, duffer!" he says. "Isn't it Mynheer's party?" Zus asks. "It is," declares Mevrouw, "and he shall cut the tart." I take the knife and slice into the creamy depths. "But has Mynheer no candles?" persists the disappointed maidkin. Alas, Zus, your mother cannot afford a tart big enough for all my years' demand!

There is a touch of orange in the sun now that flows in upon the mellow party: the flower of Dutch

domesticity is blowing in the children's hour. And that reminds me. . . .

The night of the year for children in Holland, their grand annual harvest and mell-supper of indulgent and sympathising affection, is the 5th of December. I ought to take up a new pen and turn a fresh page to write of Sint Niklaas; but what does it matter if I do, since there is no pot of warm memories to dip my pen into!

Sint Niklaas is just the same as Christmas Eve, some one says. But it is not, it cannot be. There are things you may not compare, howsoever alike they seem: your native landscape and mine, for example, yours for you and mine for me, charged with the magic of life in childhood and youth. So only Dutch men and women can recover the magic of Sint Niklaas, and only one or two of them, for they would have to be "the most consummate artists in the book way" to make this page glow with the fires that have shone in their eyes on these long past Fiftths of December.

In the agreeable deceptions of that night, Sint Niklaas, patron-in-chief of Dutch towns and Dutch lovers, is represented as an old man, with a long white beard, which for some reason is accepted as the sign-hirsute of benevolence; though I observe that the most disreputable among my vagabond acquaintances employ it. He wears a robe of red trimmed with ermine, carries his staff in his hand, and has a mitre on his head, and he rides a white horse whose pedigree some think they can trace back to Woden's horse, Sleipnir. Attending him is a black servant (the Knecht Rupert), who carries one bag full of presents and another concealing a rod: for the good saint chastises the naughty as well as rewards the well-behaved. And on the eve of December 6, under cover of his magic tabard, the two ride together

on circuit round the roofs of the world—"from Amsterdam to Spain," the wide world for the Dutch boys and girls who first invoked him.

"Sint Niklaas, goed, heilig man,
Trek je beste tabberd an,
Ryd er mee naar Amsterdam,
Van Amsterdam naar Spanje,
Appeltjes van Oranje,
Appeltjes van de peereboom,
Sint Niklaasje is myn oom."

They do not hang up stockings overnight to be swollen from his beneficence, but place boots or shoes in the chimney corner behind the stove, singing the while—

"Sint Niklaas Kapoentje
Gooi wat in myn schoentje
Gooi wat in myn laarsje
Dank U, Sint Niklaasje."

"Sint Niklaas Kapoentje"—this is not the last time that rhyme has pressed an unmeaning word into her service—"put something in my shoes, put something in my boots. Thank you, Sint Niklaas!" Then leaving a carrot or two or a wisp of hay for the white horse, they go to bed justified in their assurance of the saint's kind deeds. And in the morning, surely enough, carrots and hay have disappeared.

It is the season for the interchange of gifts. Coleridge, writing of what he saw when travelling in North Germany, described a custom of present-giving at Christmas in terms exactly applicable to that of Sint Niklaas in the Low Countries. The gifts are not costly, but derive most of their value and all of their fun from the care which has been spent in devising such as are curious, or are specially suitable or even pleasantly ridiculous for the recipient. Their great merit comes from keeping their nature secret until the moment for presenting

them arrives. They must be surprises. I began to notice a year or two ago that the shopkeepers were laying in stocks of "surprises," which I took to be the first signs of the decay of the custom; and it has fallen a little into disuse. Bought gifts are too costly to go round, and the very spirit of the festival is a great expansiveness of heart, a girth and rotundity of well-wishing. If it is to survive, there must be a return to the olden way, when for days and weeks previously factories of surprises are running overtime in all the retired corners of the house.

Every one in this good old way knows that Sint Niklaas gifts are in progress—it cannot be hid; but the knowledge does not take away from the pleasure either of giving or of receiving them. A stupid shrewdness is not permitted to penetrate the mystery of the festival, which a happy conspiracy increases by a wise childish pretence at anonymity. Few fail to guess the donors, and as a matter of fact those who do fail are not long allowed to remain in doubt. Every one takes a hand in this game of surprises. We have seen a good-natured uncle sally forth with two boxes under his arm. Both were intended for the same destination, and both reached it, but by different ways. The old gentleman placed one on the doorstep of his niece's house, rang the bell, and from a little distance watched the summons being answered and his parcel carried indoors. Then, in order that the children should not think that it came by the same hand as the first, he takes the air on the plantsoen before depositing the second box in the same spot as the first, and watching its disappearance in turn. The deception was successful with no one but himself, but his satisfaction in the manœuvre was great.

The long life enjoyed by many institutions, and not

Dutch ones only, is not improbably due to the feasts which always celebrate their anniversaries. But for these many would be moribund or dog-dead which now show the vitality of annuitants. Hollow and worn out themselves, with scarce any in'ards of their own, they exist by favour of appetites that have literally eaten them into longevity. They are most numerous in Holland because there this habit of commemorative dining being national, there is the greatest public interest in their survival. Travellers from Tacitus to Guicciardini have observed how the Dutch never miss an opportunity of a feast, and they still make it, where other Calvinists would a sermon, the method of improving an occasion.

There remain many survivals of an extensive ritual of eating and drinking prescribed for social observance during several centuries, and innumerable beverages and bon-bons are still associated with expressions of felicitation. What would Sint Niklaas, for example, be without the thin, crisp, all-spiced gingerbread cakes, in homely figures—the *speculaas*—that have been its special baking possibly since ever it was a feast. And to how many Dutch folk do not New-Year's-eve good wishes recall *bolussen* and punch?

While I am among these spiced and spirituous recollections, I must not forget the extraordinary variety of local confections and sweets that have survived with a reputation all over the country. A hundred years ago, I have read somewhere, Leyden had a hundred different kind of cakes. Every town still seems to possess one at least. Utrecht has it *theerandjes*, sugared and cinnamon-spiced rusks, packed in coarse red Dutch paper, with a double eagle and the coat of arms of Amsterdam (Mynheer explained to me), mistakenly supposed to be the arms of Utrecht Province. Deventer *koek*, a ginger-

bread, has a wrapper that reminds me always of Egyptian mysteries. *Amsterdamsche korstjes*, *Haarlemmer halletjes*, *Haarlemmer roode letters*, *Haagsche hopjes*, *Goudsche sprits*, *Nymeeegsche moppen*: I would ask Mevrouw to add to the list, but here we are interrupted.

Rink, her gardener, appears in the doorway, on stockinged feet, his cap in his hand, the sweat in drops where his grizzled hair meets his temples, the marks of the sun on his clean-shaven face.

"Mynheer, Mevrouw, kinderen, goeie nacht," he says gravely.

"Goeie nacht, Rink!" "Goeie nacht, Rink," a dozen voices follow him out to the hall. At the outer door he slips his feet into his wooden shoes, and, his day's work done, shuffles off to his evening coffee.

Rink's departure is the signal that dinner is ended. "Children, run into the garden," says Mevrouw, balking her brother-in-law (he is old-fashioned even here) of his desire to toast the stranger. The ladies slip out after coffee: Mevrouw to the veranda, where I find her later going through some French for to-morrow with one of the higher-burgher-school girls; Marie and her aunt to join the children, whose voices in their game float in to us among the smoke of cigars. "*Beau château*" they are singing—

*"Beau Château, Bataviere, Bataviere,
Beau Château Bataviere, viere-vo!
Qui prendrez vous . . . viere-vo!"*

I am back in my room upstairs overlooking the square; setting down two last typical impressions of a round of the clock in old Holland.

My hostess, when we all met again in the *voorkamer*

for tea, was seated at the table before a lacquered tray, into which had been let a sheet of glass, to prevent scratches. Rika had placed next to her a wooden tea-stove, bound and lined with brass; and in it, resting on a triangle on the burning peat, was a kettle, burnished with ruddle, to keep it deep in tone. Mevrouw infused the tea herself in a silver teapot standing on a nickel spirit-lamp. Beside it was the tea-caddy, with a silver top. The teaspoons lay to her hand in a box of tortoise-shell. The cups were Chinese blue. A square silver box on the table holds, in old-fashioned custom, sweet biscuits or *krakelingen*. All over Holland, with precisely the same immemorial array about them, Dutch ladies entertain their families and good friends in homely sessions at the tea-drinking hour.

A later hour in the *voorkamer*. The guests have departed. The children are asleep. The maids on their way upstairs come in to bid their good-nights. By the last post has been delivered the *Rotterdammer*, and Mynheer, lighting a fresh cigar, and pushing the box towards me, settles himself to the evening sheets. The housewife, her basket by her side, her bunch of keys at rest in it at last, can enjoy a peaceful hour with Anatole France, who has entered with the portfolio of the reading club, Holland's circulating library. Marie has chosen the *Gartenlaube*. Willem and I are turning over its other contents: *Fliegende Blätter*, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, *Punch*, *De Gids*, *The London News*, *L'Illustration*. This is the hour of the Portefeuille, the vehicle that brings all the world into thousands of *voorkamers*, and leaves them—look where you may—still incorruptibly Dutch.

The lights are going out downstairs. I can hear them locking up at the Pastorie on the other side of the plein. Eleven strikes on the cuckoo-clock: time to

go to bed. Through the open windows, with the night scents from the trees, come the voices of dream children: *Qui prendrez-vous Bataviere-viere-vo!* The square is silent. Then *konkd-k* says a bucket set down on the *klinkers*, and the pump answers *gulp-t-t-t!*

CHAPTER XII

ON THE LAND: THE BOER

THIS chapter has nothing to do with the society (so far as it exists in Holland) which among ourselves is known as the County. Nor has it to do with the town-dwellers who pass a considerable part of the year in their summer quarters; nor with any others, rentiers, urban in their sympathies, who for their pleasure or their profit live the rural life. I am thinking of a condition rather than of a society, yet not exactly of a condition, but of all that is conveyed by what the Dutch characteristically call *het platteland*, involving the million or two souls directly interested or engaged in agriculture in one or other of its forms.

Now the characteristic figures "on the land" are the boers, and the boers are sealed books for the stranger, and even for the Dutchman who is not one of them.

The stranger scarcely catches a glimpse of them. The costumed figures that drift belated through Amsterdam streets, self-possessed but a little forlorn in their mediæval bravery, are mostly fisherfolk, from Urk, say, or Vlieland. Boers are not to be found at Marken or Volendam, and less and less in the cheese-markets of Gouda and Alkmaar. They might be seen at Utrecht or Leeuwarden cattle-markets, or on a Saturday at Deventer; but the foreigner does not push so far as a rule. And in any case it is not in market or

feast-day outings that one can know them, but on their farms (*boerderyen*), and these stand isolated and remote in the meadows, where stranger foot scarce ever penetrates. If you do venture near them, the inmates seem to be swallowed up in the vast gloom of the barn (*schuur*), and a silence ever broods over all. Perhaps you attempt to catch sight of them on the road, driving home from market, in the close recesses of their Utrecht wagons, but it is in vain; and after they have passed, you feel their eyes upon you through the peep-hole window behind. And yet I would not say that they are curious, or anything but indifferent to you. I have spoken of the boer as an oyster shut up in his polder-shell. The figure may stand.

It cannot be said that he comes very far out of his shell for the benefit of such of his countrymen as belong to another class from his own. I have always been much struck, and am as much to-day as ever, by two things: the great respect which they show to him when they meet, and the rather slighting way they speak of him behind his back. How the boer, on the other hand, speaks of them, I am unable to say, never having been taken into his confidence, which I am labouring to explain he is slow to give. But if I can judge from the cool, reserved demeanour I have frequently observed in him at their meeting, I should expect his opinion not to be lacking in criticism. He is, after all, a Dutchman.

In saying this, I am leaving unexplained whom I mean by "them,"—that must appear from the context in what follows,—and the varying conditions and status and fortunes of "him," which subsequent pages are to exhibit. My point at the moment is that there is a ringed-off state of "boer" which dwells within its own borders, and is treated with respect in its retreat, but is not very greatly in sympathy with its neighbours. And

I make the point here, because it appears likely that when Dutch agriculture passes through its present transitory phase, that ringed-off state will have largely disappeared.

The number of cultivators on the six and a half million acres in Holland is a little over 180,000, exclusive of those with less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres. Some of them own their land, others rent it, and some rent land and work it with their own. We will be right in saying that fully half the Dutch farmers are peasant proprietors; and it will be well to keep in view that we are including with them the market-gardeners, of whom over a half rent their gardens. But the tendency is slowly downwards, at least off the sand.

These peasant proprietors are found in greatest numbers in the east and south; that is to say, where the farms run smallest. It is true that they are most numerous of all in Groningen, where lie the largest arable farms. But Groningen, with two-thirds of its farmers owners, including those under the system or *beklemrecht*, is an exception.

North Holland may be considered as holding the balance fairly even, though it also inclines against proprietorship; in South Holland, Zeeland, and Friesland the percentage of owners probably never exceeds forty per cent., and in most it is only a little above thirty, and in these four Provinces (with Groningen) are found three-fourths of the farms over 125 acres. So that it is in North Brabant, Overijssel, Limburg, and Gelderland that we are to look chiefly for the peasant proprietor, and we find him there most numerous on the sandy soil.

Of the land thus parcelled out among the cultivators with over $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres, 23·5 per cent. lies in farms of from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 25 acres, 20·5 per cent. from 25 to 50; 32 per



COMING INTO TOWN



THE CHEESE MARKET, ALKMAAR

cent. from 50 to 125; and 10·5 per cent. above 125 acres. Thus nearly sixty per cent. of the entire cultivated surface is held in lots of under 50 acres, and the size of the holdings steadily decreases. The exact statistics are not available; but it is within the mark to put the increase of farms at or below 25 acres in the last twenty years at twenty per cent., with a decrease in those above 25 acres of over two per cent. I have no information as to how far this decrease of large holdings occurs among peasant proprietors, but at least it cannot have occurred in Groningen, where the *beklemrecht* prevents the breaking up of properties.

The size of the farms does not vary more than their constitution and culture. From my account of the physical conditions of Holland the reader will have pictured broadly the distribution of its soils; and the uses to which they are put we shall see immediately when we visit the boer in his *boerdery*. The barest outline of both, therefore, is all that is necessary now.

There is fertile sea-clay in all Zeeland, in parts of N. Holland and S. Holland, and in the northern parts of Friesland and Groningen, and there is marshy fen in the Hollands and the south-west of Friesland. In addition there is the stretch of alluvial sand-soil (*geest grond*, as it is called) within the dunes. Such, broadly, is the constitution of the lowlands. Sand, gravel, low and high fen, and river-clay compose the remainder of the country.

The juicy meadows, which give Holland its especial character, lie for the greater part on the low fen, floating, one might say, on the surface of the water; it is from this low fen that are taken the great hay crop, and the butter and cheese that fill the markets of Bolsward, Gouda, and Alkmaar, and the harbours of Sneek and Harlingen. Fully a third of Holland is permanent

meadow on fen and the lighter clays, mostly, of course, in the west of the country. About a quarter of Holland again is arable, for the greater part in Groningen and Zeeland. In them are the rich sea-clay polders, which, with the new polders on the fen are as gracious land for the husbandman as any in the world. And in Groningen and in Drente, on the so-called *dal-grond* recovered from the heaths, is the remarkable special industry of the "fen-colonies," not to be written of in detail here. It is also to be noted that of the garden ground (which is 2.25 per cent. of the whole), the Hollands provide the largest surface, and that where the culture is most intensive. Between them they possess ninety per cent. of the glass for vegetable and fruit.

Coming off the lowlands, we have on the diluvial sand (alongside high fen) and on the river-clay of the other provinces an admixture of cultures such as are to be found in the north and west, but without their particularity. In Utrecht is a little of everything. Tillage and cattle-rearing and gardening, and especially the orchards on the Betuwe river-clay, the cropping of the *löss-grond* of Limburg, and the culture of the "green-grounds" along the little rivers of North Brabant, with the wastes of Drente and the sand of the Veluwe, give variety if not fatness of life to the population of the higher lands. And here appears most of the wood (half of it fir) that in the last twenty years has increased by over twenty per cent., and now occupies some eight per cent. of Holland's surface.

These figures, which have an interest for such as would understand Holland's contribution to the land question, are set down here as the quickest means of indicating the wide range of material condition among the Dutch boers. They differ as well in race as in religion, in costume, in the construction of their farm-

buildings, and in their methods of farming. The Frisian is not to be judged by the Frank. The marketers of Leeuwarden and Groningen bear little resemblance to those of Deventer and of Utrecht, and those of North Holland are distinct from all the rest.

Some marks of their difference will appear as we proceed. In view of them it may seem absurd to speak of a ringed-off class of boer, and so it would be were no notice taken of the variety that exists within its marches. That variety indeed is one of the perennial delights of the Dutch country, and it is to be found not merely between the different provinces and countrysides, but equally in the same polder or commune. The contrast between the Groningen "fen-colonist" and him of, say, the Brabant Peil, is not greater than that between the "fen-colonist" and his neighbour on the Groningen peat.

How far within the smaller ring these smaller circles are recognised, with a consequent influence upon social life and intercourse, must be left for those to say who know the boer better than I know him, or than probably any stranger can. Polder or communal jealousy, as it shows itself, for example, in the young males for their womankind, does not necessarily indicate a complete harmony among those banded together against a common rival. One is rash to attack any of a family of brothers because they are for ever squabbling among themselves. I have been told that the boer on the river dike looks down upon the inland boer; and I can quite believe, as I have also been told, that acquaintance with the larger effects of nature, and the sense the river gives of a greater world beyond, has the effect of making superior men of those who see them daily from the dikes. And if he is superior I have no doubt the boer knows it, and knowing it acts, by human-nature standards, "accordin'."

It is quite certain, at any rate, that these distinctions

of material and other conditions among the boers do affect the attitude towards them of their neighbours in other classes. This brings me back to a matter with which the chapter started. Neither the respect nor the disconsideration to which I referred earlier is uniform; and as a matter of fact it is not desirable to lay stress on either, so soon as the point they were intended to enforce is made. I am thinking merely of my own experiences when seeking the boer in his *boerderij*. I was always dependent for the introduction upon outsiders, and it was their evident anxiety as to the resulting visit which enlightened me about the spirit of watchful reserve between the farming and the other classes in Holland. Probably it is only the boer who is inspired with it, and if I am right he does not trouble to exhibit it towards the *bourgeoisie*. They are beneath his slightly unamiable attentions. It is on the "gentleman" (to define his civilisation no more narrowly at present) that he bestows them; and the gentleman, being aware of his animus, treats him with the varying degrees of respectfulness which I discovered.

I was always on these visits accompanied by my host, and a certain punctiliousness of demeanour was observed on both sides. In the countrysides with larger farms a request to be allowed to bring the stranger was sometimes, I know, sent in advance, and permission received, before our call was made. We went without any such formality when the farm was small and in parts of the country, such as Gelderland, where the status of the farmer is lower. But everywhere there was a certain deference, and on our return some curiosity generally was manifest in the household as to how the visit "went off."

I may have remarked more than there really was, being accustomed to the large farms at home, and falling,

in spite of much evidence to correct me, into the error of regarding boers so closely packed together as cottagers. At home, among the cottagers, there would have been with hosts like mine the same care not to presume. But I fancy that this deference, though I may have been mistaken about its extent, had more in it than that.

How shall I convey the exact shade I discover in the relationship? I put it to my friend the notary, after one of these visits, that there was something just a little discreet underlying its hospitality and obvious friendliness. Divining my difficulty, "Well, you know," he said, "they are—well, you may say, our equals." With no more than that slight hesitancy in finding words for it, he evidently felt the equality. True, "they" were big farmers on the Zeeland clay. But the polite squire or even the polite stockbroker at home would not include any one whom he thought to approach within a mile of equality with himself in a general description of "farming folk." Whereas in Holland, it seems to me, the largest farmers and their wives are often rounded up with the owner of a hectare and his, in the phrase *boeren en boerinnen*.

Perhaps for our English ears there are associations with the word boer which prejudice it. And then the farmers' wives are sometimes alluded to as *boerinnetjes*. There is nothing affectionate in the use of the diminutive here, except just that affection for their own and their institutions which leads the Dutch to extend the endearing "tje" to everything from a child to a carrot. As a diminutive proper it is singularly inappropriate to those tall, stately, yet slightly awkward women, like Bornean heiresses carrying their wealth on their heads, whom I seem to remember best as sitting impassively in Sunday tramcars anywhere within twenty miles of Hoorn. And their "man," the North Holland boer, is not a gentleman

to be addressed familiarly on any score. Down in Guelders, on the other hand, and in North Brabant, and in Utrecht often, and in places, in fact, that are mostly Frankish, people run small, and despite a Frankish gaiety, affect black in their dress, which always has a further dwarfing effect.

If the first type goes with the impression of self-centred and remote farms, the second accords precisely with the alternative impression one seems to carry away from Holland of market-places and trains and third-class waiting-rooms, filled with little peasant women like ants caught at a moment of semi-suspended animation, absorbed in themselves, indifferent to all the world besides. Confined to them—which it is not—“*boer-innetjes*” is appropriate enough.

That is a small matter at most. The chief consideration I refer to is an allegation which I have heard in no particular part of the country, but over it all, from lawyers, students, doctors, officials—persons of the “civilised” classes—that the boers are suspicious and keen, and that “they will do you if they can.”

I told the squire one day that the boer was going to take me round his farm, and perhaps I indicated a hope of learning much from him about his conditions.

“All right,” was the answer. “You tell me what he says, and I’ll tell you whether it is true.”

There was a glimpse of their relations; and I think I was right in seeing at that glimpse not more a distrust of the boer than a suspicion that perhaps—perhaps—the boer would be a little more candid in speaking with me than he was as a rule with himself.

The squire, I ought to say, was an excellent landlord, on the best of terms with his tenants and neighbours, and, moreover, their profound admirer. When he spoke

as he did to me about their "doing" you, he had no intention to convey the opinion that the boers, as a class, are untrustworthy. In fact, when I challenged him for his precise meaning, he said to me: "You must not forget that in his business the boer is brought in contact constantly with cow-cowpers and horse-cowpers as smart as you can make 'em. And you must not forget, too, that often he works on a very small margin of profit. He is indeed suspicious; he is keen, sharp—he has to be."

That explains much. But another day, being on the same subject, which was mainly their great qualities, he added with a laugh, "And the boer loves to do a gentleman."

I think that that is the form in which, after all these modifications and refinements and withdrawals and additions, I should like to leave with the reader the somewhat crude impression of the relations between the boer and his neighbours with which this chapter started.

The strain in them, so far as there is a strain, and I think it is very considerable, is that between theory and practice. The boer was, and is still, extraordinarily conservative. Nature made him so, and keeps him so. His is not a country for the steam-plough, but it is one wonderfully suited for all the older forms of hand-work and its accompaniments,—the sickle, the flail, the country wagon, the market-cart drawn by dogs. The circumstances of his neighbours react to preserve him in the place he has made for himself. The professional classes for their living depend largely upon serving him. The commercial classes in the past have turned their attention to import and transit, not so much to production. There was, until recently, little of the pressure and the temptation of industrial towns to draw away the population

on which he depended. In the absence of employment there was no great inducement for him to colonise. Even when he fell behind the times, it could not be said that he did not know his business, but at most that he failed to recognise the change in other people's. He preserved all over Holland a great farming tradition.

Among the townsmen, on the other hand, you had, as you have still, one exceedingly highly educated class—possibly the most so in the world. It is this class that supplies the administration of the country. It fills the professions. The notaries come from it, the lawyers, the clergymen, the burgomasters, the canton-judges, often the dike counts,—all, in fact, who are brought most directly in contact with a self-supporting farming class, which is little dependent on the shopkeeper and the *bourgeoisie*.

There were the lists set. The boer sat in his *boerdery*. He “did a power of fatigue, sitting.” He did a power of fatigued thinking, sitting. It is true that his history and training conduced to a certain want of alertness of wits, as well as to the more superficial disadvantage of ancient fashions. His wits were not, indeed, kept blunt. They were very much alive within their own province; they only did not work widely,—not more widely than his own market-place. But you could not measure either the height or the depth of the thoughts of the boer; they were not to be judged by their coming back to match the wits of the horse-cowper, and to concentrate upon his work. His work, at any rate, was successful. He flourished. The element of proprietorship leavened the whole *boerestand*, giving the boer a sense of his position. He knew his own skill, his safe could often reveal the coupon-tokens of his success. Why should their education make him envy the doctor and the

lawyer and the burgomaster, when he had so poor an opinion of them for all their education?

He had not much reason to think very highly of them when they took to farming, at any rate, as the fate of many gentlemen-farmers and their model farms proved. He did not envy them their education. But it gave them something that he had not, something which he knew was there, though he could not define its quality.

On the other side there were these townsmen, by training and tradition a little too much inclined to lay stress on book-learning which is not the whole of education; equally conscious of a superiority, and conscious also of something in the boer that commanded respect, as it commanded success, and which they had not got.

The situation was not one of landlord and tenant, or the class that supplies tenants. No such relationship established a traditional superiority the one over the other. The facts were that, as equality is ultimately accounted in this world, the boer was the equal of the other, who was supported largely, not by rents from his own acres, but by payments for services rendered to this farmer class and all its dependents.

The boer estate has its leaders. Some of them, I believe, sit in the First Chamber, which betokens material fortune as well as gifts of mind and energy. I would not be mistaken. It has fallen to me to enjoy the hospitality, and now the friendship, of farming households around whose solid and simple life play the graces of culture, and spreads the enlargement of an alert humour. These also are leaders of their class. And I do not think any of them would deny the conditions of "boer," in which I have placed them, and have included no less the rudest folk in an Overijssel *losse huis*, who warm

their hands and scheme their little profits over a wood fire at the end of the *deel*. Why should they? The boers were the backbone of Holland in the past. The signs are misleading if they are not the hope of its future.

CHAPTER XIII

RURAL CUSTOMS

IF the previous chapter left an impression of the Dutch farmer living remote from the world, like the Boer upon the veldt, it has performed its purpose. I wished to fix the picture of his old estate, from which he is now moving out. It still exists.

But it does not exist everywhere, and it never is so antiquated as it sometimes is described. I have read accounts of Dutch farming life that were wonderfully entertaining, only their writers forgot to say that the customs they depicted had all died out from twenty to two hundred years ago. The advantages of that omission must be sacrificed in a chapter on life on the land as it is to-day. The greater part of the Dutch country has become quite ordinary, or extraordinary only for its modern energies. Innumerable traces of the past are still visible in it, but pure and characteristic survivals are difficult to find. The railway, the steam-tram, the travelling teacher, the trade school, even the Orthodox zeal against the kermis, have driven them into their last fastnesses.

They group themselves around the cardinal events in the passage through life. Even as they exist at this moment they clearly show their descent from the custom and ceremonial associated in classic Dutch times with

birth, marriage, death, and the holy day. The difficulty is to follow their infinite local variety.

In writing of them now, it seems best to centre oneself within a definite region; and so I propose, with friendly offices, to describe those of a South Holland island. Through coming early under the French influence of the Hague, the South Holland mainland lost some individuality while yet North Holland and other provinces were persistent in their ancient ways. But the islands were still shut, and they have only recently been opened. Until the other day there was no steam-tram, but only a boat to them from Rotterdam, and the islanders were deeply enclosed in an old manner of living.

When a child is born in our island the father and two witnesses appear within three days at the town hall and register the birth. There is many a tavern at hand should they wish next to call hansel in on the newcomer. The nurse (the *baker*) has immediately published the news among the neighbours, who duly, after the ninth day, visit the *kraam* (*convive de commères*), and reward her attentions with a tip. They are entertained with tea and coffee (and doubtless gin), and always with the traditional "biscuits with mice," buttered rusks spread with sugared aniseed, smooth at the birth of a girl, rough if of a boy. This confection the witnesses have already carried round to the houses of good friends.

On a Sunday, six or seven weeks later, the family assemble in the church for the christening. After the first sermon they are ushered into the space between the pulpit and the high seats of the elders, there being no baptistery in Dutch kirks. In settling them, the services are required of the pew-opener, who is known also as the *hondenslager*, since his duties, like the Highland beadle's, include keeping order among the

curs (not sheep-dogs here) who invade the sanctuary at the heels of their masters. The babe, in hereditary christening robe, is carried in by the *baker*, or possibly by a youthful niece. It is the mother who holds him up at the font for the minister to baptize him "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." The congregation standing to sing from the 134th Psalm—

"From Zion' hill the Lord thee bless,
That heav'n and earth did frame"

(which in the Dutch version is prolonged into four verses of lugubrious measure), the little Christian, less to his profit than to hers, is carried off by the *baker* to be exhibited in a round of visits.

That is all that survives in this island of the vast ceremonial (mostly of eating and drinking) associated with the *kraam kamer* in earlier centuries. The word *kraam* (itself a survival) is variously derived. Etiquette forbade the mother appearing out of doors for six weeks after the birth of her child, and so *carême* is suggested, which sounds a little far-fetched. *Kraam* is a booth, and as the confinement-room went like a kermis-booth, that may be all there is in the name. The presiding genius in its bustle and stir, the *baker*, still remains,—a comforting gossip, jealous of her vails. The old 30-cents piece, no longer minted, used to go by the name of the "*baker's* shilling." In places, the baptism-cloth is still in use,—a long square of lace attached to the *baker's* shoulder, and thrown over the child. One article of the birth-feasts is constant throughout Holland, and in all orders, the buttered "biscuits with mice." They were not forgotten at the Holborn Restaurant last year when the Dutch Colony in London celebrated the birth of an heir to their Queen. Following custom, they were smooth for a Princess. Should "Juliana a brother have," they doubtless will be served roughened.

Marriage in Holland, a civil ceremony, is preceded by *aanteekenen*, or "signing on," the signal of betrothal. The papers connected with this process being duly signed and countersigned, the banns of marriage are proclaimed at the town hall. Here in the island the custom is to have cards printed, in a very elegant type, announcing the betrothal, and these are handed round at the houses of friends and neighbours by six, twelve, or even more, bride's children, dressed in their best, and sometimes carrying dainty baskets of *bon-bons*. These bride's sweets are packed in white glazed-paper bags, edged with paper lace, possibly inscribed in gold lettering, "From bride and bridegroom," and baskets and bags are decorated with ribbons, green to denote hope, and red for love, or black and white if the family is in mourning. Little gifts of money sometimes bestowed on the bride's maids are expended by them on a gift for the bride.

The Dutch, I have already remarked, are not strong believers in the wisdom of youth; and bride and bridegroom, unless they are ripe lovers of thirty, require the consent of their parents to their marriage. An official in one of the island villages once, having put the question of consent to the father, was startled to get the answer: "Sure, carle, else why should I be here!"

Preliminaries being in order, and a fortnight having passed since the *aanteekening*, three clear days after the third proclamation of the banns the marriage is celebrated at the town hall. On the wedding morning bride and bridegroom drive in from the farm in a high tilbury, followed by relations and witnesses in vehicles of wondrous variety. A village party comes on foot. Only the Orthodox seek the Church's blessing upon the burgomaster's union. In well-to-do families, the parents give a dinner-party. The farmers again generally invite their friends and neighbours to the house on several

evenings to felicitate the wedded pair. Tarts are eaten and wine is drunk, and at the moment the performance of a comedy by rustic mummers is quite the fashionable entertainment. Dutch rustics have a passion for the buskin, and, under the title of *rederykers* still, carry on the traditions of the Chambers of Rhetoric. The sensational drama, played by them in the village inn, enlivens winter evenings in many countrysides. Among the *bourgeoisie*, amateur theatricals are the full-dress entertainments of the season.

It is unusual for the islanders to marry outside their own rank. Courtship is free. There is no interference of outsiders in the preliminaries to marriage; no *schot* or dowry. The bride brings an "outset" of linen and some furniture. Subject to the parents' or guardians' consent, the young people arrange their own marriages.

The bride's sweets which we have observed at betrothals in the island are as constant at all Dutch receptions before the marriage as the wedding cake is with us on the wedding-day. They are sent out to the children of family friends, those of old servants, and the seamstress and charwomen not being forgotten. In North Holland I have seen wedding parties driving about the countryside in high-wheeled chaises, decorated with flowers and favours, bride and bridegroom leading, and distributing bride-sweets in handfuls to the children on the roads. "Pour-out, pour-out!" Scots children shout to wedding-guests, demanding coppers, which they do not always get. "Strew your sugars about, bride!" call out the Dutch children, and she never fails them.

The freedom of courtship among the Dutch peasantry was remarked by the moralists in the seventeenth century, and particularly the custom, or variety of custom, known as *queesten*, long surviving in the coast villages, which, however, will not detain us. The failure to follow the

civil marriage with one in the church is often accounted for by the fear of the dominee's frankness of reprimand over the delay in celebrating either.

Touching consent, a curious case came under my notice in one of the Eastern Provinces, where Amsterdam orphans are frequently boarded out with the peasantry—for ten pounds a year, I believe. One of the orphan girls was chosen by a boer for his wife. The date of the marriage was fixed, and preliminary forms attended to in good time, when a legal difficulty arose over the question of guardianship. It took months to settle who was the bride's guardian, and meanwhile, waiting the unknown's consent, the marriage was postponed. The case was the talk of the countryside, and I observed that the aspect of it which appealed to all classes was the misfortune of the man who was deprived of a woman to assist him on his farm. This utilitarian element in marriage, strongest, of course, where holdings run small, accounts for some conditions of married life among the peasantry which I have indicated earlier.

On many of these farms the boer's only hope of profitable working lies in the assistance of wife and children. A son is desirable as a *knecht*. A daughter growing up takes the place of the maid for the milking, and a daughter-in-law who does so is equally acceptable. The son, when he marries, brings his wife to live with his parents. Often it is from their house she is married, she and her "outset" being transported thither the previous night. A second son also will sometimes bring home a daughter-in-law. Frequently several households live together thus: where they bestow themselves it is better not to ask.

Three unmarried brothers lived on a farm I know in Overijssel. The old people were dead. The second son announced his intention of marrying. "Oh no," said

the eldest, "I have chosen a wife, and your girl is she!" So he brought her home, and with the milkmaid to aid she kept house for the three brothers. A year or two passed, and the eldest died, and the second married his old flame, the widow. She also died, by and bye, and the third son now claimed to find a wife to keep house. But "No," answered his elder, "I'm thinking of marrying again." "Then," said the other, "I marry the *meid*!" This, however, was too much domesticity, even for Overysse, and the debate, when I heard last, was still proceeding.

It is in association with death that customs linger longest. Respect for the dead (probably old people) demands a continuance of ceremonies that they themselves approved. And we are all conservative in the presence of death. I have remarked illustrations of this in Holland which caused me no surprise, so often had I known the same conservative feeling manifested at home in Scotland. There, at a time of death among them, and never else, families would fall back upon antique ways; and so it is in Holland. I remember a funeral from a house notable for its hospitality and good cheer. When the body was laid in its grave, and the dead man's friend had spoken his virtues over it, and the bearers gathered their staves, we returned to drink coffee at the well-known board, and found it simply furnished with the customary funeral breads. The dead was respected, I felt, in that custom of the countryside. I thought of this when a few months later I was at the funeral of another old friend in London. We gathered at the house at the hour, the coffin was carried out while we drank coffee in the study, some one called us in our order to our carriage, we drove off through Mayfair slowly, by and bye at a trot, to Highgate, and our dead was buried with decorum and

dispatch,—with a perfectly beautiful, smooth, inhuman decorum and dispatch. I think he also would have approved of the antique ways and the funeral breads of his old Scottish home.

I have already described the *aanspreker* on his round announcing a decease. Important families on the island sometimes employ two of these officials, who also invite to the funeral by word of mouth. For that is chosen occasionally the early hour of ten, without tolling of bells. More usually the small bell rings for five minutes at half-past ten, and again at eleven, and an hour later, perhaps, the big bell announces that the cortege has started, and tolls until the coffin is in the grave. The body is borne thither by twelve bearers, who are generally tipped with a guilder or a ryksdaalder. But should it be a young daughter of the house who has died, the young men of her acquaintance seek to comfort the parents by taking the bearers' places.

The women assisting in the house cover the coffin and stretcher with the mortcloth before the bearers step off, followed by the mourners—all men, who sometimes wear a long veil from their hats. In one village of the island only do women join the procession, and they cover their heads with a black apron so closely that they can just see to pick their steps. So long as the body is above ground, blinds are usually kept down as far as the wire screen, and frequently windows are shut and curtains drawn in the houses while the funeral passes. In very old-fashioned families, while the dead lie in the house, mirrors and pictures are turned to the wall, with a curiously tragic effect.

If no clergyman or friend, orating at the grave-side, thanks the company for attending, the family does so by messenger. The bearers walk last in the returning procession.

Not in this island, but in South Beveland, at Goes, and in some Brabant villages also, small bundles of wheat are laid on the threshold of a house of mourning—one for a child, two for a man, three for a woman.

Entirely different customs hold in Saxon Overysssel, where arrangements for all festive and mourning ceremonies are left to the "neighbours." These are just the inhabitants of the nearest dwelling, on whom custom imposes the offer of their services, which it would be the last insult to refuse or ignore. They invite to the wedding feast; and to the funeral feast as well, for feast it is in Overysssel, and in some other provinces also. It is considered in Overysssel a mark of respect to the dead to keep the body in the house to the last hour permitted by the law. Until the fifth day it lies in the coffin under the window in the kitchen where the whole household lives and sometimes half of it sleeps. The countryside is bidden to the burial, and most of it comes. The coffin is lifted upon the table in a kitchen crammed with the mourners' nearest of kin, and often is opened that they may have a last look upon the face of the dead. Some kiss it, I have been told, before the coffin is closed, and carried to the threshing-floor, whose greater space holds the further crowd that has gathered. All are entertained with meats and drinks, soft rolls and cheese, much coffee and more gin. Late in the day the cortege is formed, and the body carried on an open wagon along the country roads to the graveyard. In Utrecht Province I have seen four horses dragging the cart, a farmer astride the leader, and the women relations, deeply shrouded, seated on the coffin.

Ours (to return to it once more) is an island where Orthodox sentiment has done away with the kermis; diminishing the communal treasury by the rental of kermis-stances without (my responsible informant told

me) putting an end to such few evils of the fair as ever there were. The taverns suffer.

A young man invited the maid of his fancy to keep the kermis with him. Attaching themselves to a company of a dozen or twenty, they went fairing together. The time was spent between the booths and the tavern, and at a late hour the girl was escorted home with presents of Groningen and Deventer cake. The villagers walked. The young farmers drove their lasses home in their tilburys. When they rode over a *heul*, a conduit for the polder off-waterings, astonishingly numerous on the road they chose, the lad had the right to take toll of a kiss. In the calm of the following Sunday (if he observed old custom), he called at the house of the girl to drink coffee. His presents of cake were already cut in slices, and if the crust only was offered him he knew that his company was no longer desired by his kermis maid. In an earlier day the polite fashion of declining a lover's attentions was to get hold of the tongs the instant he appeared.

Overijssel, to which we turn again for contrast, supplies more primitive and wilder pictures, but its recesses too are being opened up. A new cross railway line, from Delden to Lochem, for example, taps an isolated district where the mills of Twente did not tempt the peasants' daughters from service or their sons off the land. Here lies Stockum, noted for an unlicked population, which loves a fight with its neighbours of Markeloo, who are nowise loath to oblige. A maid-servant in a country house I have visited in these parts trysted with a *knecht* to be his kermis girl. She was not his sweetheart, but just his girl for the day—a *losse-meid*, as they say. However, she changed her mind, and when he met her at the fair, lo! she was with another swain. My story does not say whether this other was a town lover: if so, anywhere in



ACCEPTED ADDRESSES
FROM THE PAINTING BY H. VALKENBURG

Holland the sequel would be explained. The polder man wishes no poachers on his preserves, least of all townsmen. The *knecht* followed the couple on their way home, or lay in wait for them on the road, I forget which, and stabbed his rival in the back. There we have a glimpse of the kermis passions let loose, as Mr. Querido paints them.

Race partly determines customs in the country, no doubt, as the next chapter will tell it determines the costumes. Religion also we look to for explanation; but here there are pitfalls. One might conclude that Palmpaschen is Roman Catholic in origin, and consequently most general in the Southern Provinces. I find from a very careful study of Palm-Sunday customs, by Dr. C. Catharina van de Graft, that this is not so. There are few occurrences of it in Brabant and Limburg. A map of its distribution proves it to be confined to the east of the country, with a few appearances in North Holland and Utrecht.

The day before Palm Sunday, in all the towns and villages of Drente, Gelderland, and Overijssel, cocks, swans, and some other figures made in bread are fetched home from the baker, and with them the elders decorate for the children a Palmpaasch, its construction varying with each place. The stick, half a yard to a yard and a half long, is attached to a bunch of boxwood or periwinkle (not always easy to find); the Palmpaasch is thus not a palm at all, except that in Dutch periwinkle is called the *Maagden-palm*. On it are impaled oranges, currant-buns, figs, cakes, and other delicacies (symbols of fertility), on which paper flags are placed symmetrically, and the wreath thus formed, really a Maytree in miniature, is generally crowned with a cock, the figure of protection, as its presence on our church steeples shows.

The small boys and girls, dressed in their best, and

each with a Palmpaasch, join in procession, and visit the houses round, where they get sweets or money. In common with the songs and rhymes associated with these old customs, that sung on Palm Sunday has now taken many versions, not all of them with any meaning left. One of these, however, runs thus—

“ *Palm, Palmpaschen*
Eikoerei!
Over eenen Zondag
Dan Krygen wy een ei
Een ei is geen ei
Twee ei is een half ei
Drie ei is een Paaschei;”

and *Eikoerei!* it is surmised, stands for Kyrie eleison “Lord, have mercy upon us,” the only sign of a connection between the Church and the Palmpaasch.

In earlier times, yet not so long ago, the girls were always dressed in white and the boys in new suits for Palmpaschen. Many of the *bourgeoisie* in these eastern towns put their children into new clothes at Easter still, as at my first school fires were put on at the autumn fair, and never before, whatever the weather. In the ancient town of Oldenzaal Palm Sunday is the day for breeching boys. These careful Dutch parents often make pap of the bread which the children bring home, and the Oldenzaal women (thrifty souls) use the periwinkle staff as a besom.

In Roman Catholic districts the palm branches used in processions are consecrated, and kept by their owners for a year, and then burned. With the ashes the priest makes a cross on the forehead of believers on Ash Wednesday, as a symbol of mortality and penitence. The consecrated palm branch is hung above the font of holy water, and is used for sprinkling the dead, or placed in rooms as a protection against lightning. Or it is hung

above the doors of stables and barns and the mangers of the cattle, to frighten away the spirits of illness and failing crops. For this purpose an unconsecrated branch is kept in stable and manger by Protestant boers, but secretly, hidden behind the beams, for they are rather ashamed of their superstition. Palm branches are planted for increase at the four corners of field and garden, the Gospel of St. John being read the while. Both consecrated and unconsecrated, the palm is used as a cure for sore throats,—this in Alkmaar, it seems, as well as in Overijssel and Drente.

CHAPTER XIV

HUNTING THE HOUPPELANDE: A MINGLE- MANGLE OF COSTUME

I SET out to hunt the houppelande with perplexed notions of what a houppelande was. Their obfuscation was not removed by my finding the *rara avis*, or even hitting its trail. I do not now believe that there was ever a houppelande. I don't know (I may as well confess) that ever I did really believe it.

It came about in this way. I was speaking one day some years ago with Professor Gallée of Utrecht, whose death since then ended his ingenious researches towards the illumination of local ethnographic questions by the evidence of rural architecture and costume. He was explaining to me the racial significances of the construction of farmhouses and the fashion of head-dresses, some of which duly appear in this book, and he dropped the remark that "the houppelande is still to be seen here and there in Overijssel." I suppose there was something attractive or suggestive in the words which kept them quick though dormant in my memory. At any rate, the other day in Holland, when I started out to add to my bag of Dutch costume, they came suddenly to my mind, and I said to myself that I must go to Overijssel and hunt that houppelande.

Well, I went; and there, and coming and going, saw many strange and wonderful garbs, but not the houppe-

lande that is said to lurk in that delectable Province. If it really does so, I was always here when it was there. At my approach it folded its skirts and silently fled away. I never got into its fur. As far as my bag goes, it might have been the dodo.

If that had been all that escaped me, it would have mattered little. Unfortunately for myself and this chapter, before I reached Overijssel the elusive full-sleeved, high-waisted, tall-skirted mediæval garment that never was, had come to stand for something far more important than itself. It was to crown my quest by discovering for me the secret, or rather the rationale, of Dutch "costume."

Dutch "costume" is "a mingle-mangle of apparel." It is not only sporadic, surviving here and having disappeared there for no apparent reason, but bits lost in one place turn up elsewhere, a long way off, and remnants consort with remnants, and cast-offs pick up with others equally contemned, and doublets and breeches are "like Guelphs and Ghibellines to one another."

Now Professor Gallée, as I have said, and a surprisingly few others in Holland, have made a general survey of this complexity, by which we are to be guided in the expedition before us. But in whole regions the details are still unmapped, and it is doubtful if they will not remain so. The study of local history which at present occupies a new generation of Dutch scholars, will incidentally throw light upon it, but there does not appear to be anyone who is undertaking a monograph on Holland's costumes while they are still a living subject. Yet it would be well worth the effort, as will be recognised when costume is dead. The vagueness of the literature on it is doubtless due to the fact that most books on Holland have been written by men. It might be suggested to the numerous ladies who distinguish

themselves at the gymnasiums and the Universities that here is a subject, suitable for their sex though all too modest for their talents, which is urgently awaiting the doing before it is too late.

For Dutch costume is surely vanishing. The girl who served my coffee at Heereveen laughed in my face when I suggested to her that perhaps on occasion she donned an *ooryzer*. It was the *oude mode*, the old fashion, she told me, but she was ready to bring for my inspection the one her mother still wore. The old fashion takes long in conservative Holland to become obsolete. Moreover, it is costly,—one thinks twice before renouncing a helmet worth a thousand guilders, or even the silk cap of Deventer worth thirty. And so we find the hideous compromise of these costly head-dresses surmounted by bonnets of appalling ugliness and modernity. But already the bonnet sits in single state. The *oude mode* is doomed.

This chapter provides no houppebande, and, worse, no rationale of Dutch costume of which the houppebande was the symbol. So far it represents a thwarted ambition. But by such direction as it is able to give, the reader who will retrace in it, as I now invite him to, the expedition it records, may find a way through the mangle-mangle of costume that awaits him as he goes through Holland.

THE FRISIAN OORYZER

We can save ourselves a long round of Zeeland by going to Middelburg on a Thursday, for all the islands are gathered there for that day's market.

In towns like Middelburg and Flushing, the inhabitants dress in modern fashion; throughout the country, costume is confined to villages, the peasants, the dwellers on the soil, and the fisher populations. If



WOMAN AND CHILD OF THE ISLAND OF MARKEN.
(FRISIAN)



MAN OF THE ISLAND OF MARKEN :
EVERYDAY DRESS. (FRISIAN)



MARKET WOMAN OF STOKKUM, OVERYSEL.
(SAXON)



MAN OF ST. WILLEBRORD, NORTH BRABANT.
(FRANKISH)

THREE RACIAL INFLUENCES, FRISIAN, SAXON, AND FRANKISH DISCOVER
THEMSELVES IN DUTCH COSTUMES. ON THIS PAGE ARE EXAMPLES OF
PURE TYPES. NOW THAT THE HINDELOOPEN COSTUME HAS DISAPPEARED,
THAT OF MARKEN IS THE ONLY TRUE FRISIAN COSTUME WITH WHICH
THE OORYZER IS NOT WORN

in Middelburg you meet a Walcheren hat or a Goes shawl, be sure that the wearer is a country girl who has taken service there, and is permitted, possibly encouraged, by her mistress to retain the dress she wore at home. In Friesland (to make the jump northwards that the study of Dutch costume entails constantly) a girl could not, up to a few years ago, get "a place in service" unless she possessed an *ooryzer* (the Frisian helmet). To go about with the hair uncovered was regarded as indecorous. Hence it was not an unusual thing to send round the hat for a new *yzer* on behalf of a girl whose old one (as was said) "had blown into the water."

On market-day, however, Middelburg exhibits all the variety of costume (and it is great) which Zeeland possesses from Axel to Brouwershaven, and a skilled eye can tell at a glance from which island, and even corner of an island, each peasant has come. Take that woman there, for example: her hat proclaims that she is a native of Walcheren. It is of very fine straw, trimmed with wide white ribbon, and white streamers of the same material, fastened to the lining, are brought round in front. (I must crave pardon for a lack of skill in the terminology of millinery: I cannot, unfortunately, if this chapter is to be done, follow John Winthrop in writing of dress to Margaret Tyndale, and "meddle with noe particulars.") I see another Walcheren woman close by, and she has blue streamers, attached to the hat by a little hook of gold, hanging down her back. The significance of blue instead of white is hid from me.

Before the hat is put on, I am instructed, elaborate preparations are necessary. First, the hair is gathered and rolled upon the forehead, and is bound tightly in its place there by a small hood or cap of white linen. In this is fastened by pins a band of gold, the use of which

will be explained later. Next comes the *mutts*, something like a Scots mutch, of very stiffly starched white linen. To enable this *mutts* to fit tightly in spite of its stiff starching, there is a pleated inset: you can see the village girls as you pass sitting indoors working this inset, pleating it tightly with their finger-nails on a board. Over this cap comes the hat, which, however, is by many worn only at church.

The head-ornaments of this woman are numerous, and you may be sure that they are of real gold. The Dutch peasant does not wear sham jewelry. To the band of gold already mentioned, there are attached firmly at the temples, but hanging free, corkscrew-looking ornaments (*krullen*) of gold. These have pendants of gold embossed, each with a tiny pearl drop. On special occasions, perhaps on the special occasion of the kermis only, she will wear on her forehead a plate of flat gold, beautifully worked, curved to the shape of the head, and tapered to a point which is stuck into the hair at the side. This ornament (of which more later) is known as the *voornaald*. The necklace is of blood-red coral, and has a gold clasp. I am reminded that in olden days all Dutch children wore coral bracelets—many do still: it was one of the nurse's duties to see that they were not wanting, and that the peony-seeds were duly round the neck, to help the teething and to ward off convulsions.

The Walcheren jacket or bodice, generally of black material, has short sleeves, with bands of broad velvet that grip the arm tightly. Its peculiarity is that it is fashioned of one piece, which is pleated into shape—a very handsome shape often. It is cut low, even for winter wear sometimes, and pointed in front, and nowadays a kerchief is always worn under it, but in such a manner as to allow the highly coloured plastron (*beuk*)

to be seen. This *beuk* is the Urker *kraplap*. Under that again, if you accept my authorities, is a black chemise-petticoat (*hemdrok*), which in most cases is never taken off, night or day, until it is worn out! Save where it peeps out at the foot, the skirt, generally of blue and white stripe, is entirely covered by an apron of dark-coloured stuff, blue on weekdays, black on Sundays as a rule, fastened at the back by a gold hook. The shoes are of leather, with a black-and-white leather bow set low upon the instep, and in the centre of the bow there is a silver buckle, worked somewhat in the manner of the well-known Zeeland buttons. These buttons and certain hats are among the ancient traces of men's costume which survive in Zeeland more freely than in any other part of the country.

Now, looking round the market-place, we can distinguish Walcheren women at once, though probably each of the seventeen villages in the island affects some slight distinction in dress. Yonder is a woman of West Kapelle, for example, as can be seen by a peculiarity in the dressing of the hair. This woman, again, who wears above the *mutts* a cap of transparent material and singular shape, comes from the immediate neighbourhood of Middelburg itself. The Arnemuiden fisher-girls, selling shrimps and sea-kail, are not, like their neighbours here, in market or Sunday costume, but in the workaday garb in which they gather their harvest. They have put their bare feet into leather shoes, however; Dutch peasants seldom come into the towns in *klompen*, though the Zandvoort women do, since the Haarlem magistrates will not permit them to enter barefoot. If, however, there is a peasant (not a fisher) from Arnemuiden here, you will find her clad, with only the slightest modification, in Nieuwland dress.

There are many girls from Goes in the market to-day,

farmers' daughters, many of them, with well-plenished wardrobes, which they are not loath to air. The costume of South Beveland closely resembles that of Walcheren, though it is neither so formal nor so becoming. The *voornaald* is no longer so uniformly worn. A peculiarity of it was the hanging ornaments (*strikken*) attached to the square gold plates (*stukken*) on the *ooryzer*, vanities distressful to Protestant sentiment, as well as costly to maintain, whatever the wearer's creed, and so not unlikely to lead to the disappearance of the whole head-dress. In North Beveland and Tholen, Schouwen and Duiveland, where it or its ornaments are all of costume that survives, the custom already alluded to prevails of covering these ancient traces by a bonnet of hideous modernity. In South Beveland there is the same or nearly the same bodice, and the same apron. The chief differences are that a hat is not worn, and that a shawl of colours never seen in Walcheren is pleated low upon the neck. This shawl is the distinguishing mark of South Beveland; and from certain differences in the way of wearing it, as well as in the head-ornaments and the shape of the cap, one can tell the Protestants from the Catholics. (In Walcheren, by the way, Roman Catholics are found only in the towns.)

There are probably to be discovered in Middelburg market some costumes of Dutch Flanders also. If we see a woman dressed with an extreme simplicity, with full skirts, sloping shoulders, and a bodice perfectly plain save for some frilling in front, we may conclude that she comes from Cadsand. We may be certain of it if the tight-fitting cap, outlining the face and fastened under the chin, is relieved by two gold ornaments, and set off by a piece of lace hanging at the back. Yet one must distinguish, for in Cadsand there are two distinct costumes, as there are two religions and two races.

But differences of ornamentation in the plastron, and of the arrangement of the *serre-tête*, distinguish the creeds, and the married from the unmarried, in many of the islands. In Axel, where the head-ornaments survive, the flowing cap falls over enormous sleeves, above a great width of petticoat, that causes the back of the wearer to appear uncommon small: the Dutch build as a rule has "shuldris of a lange brede," and *isn't* "smalish in the girdelstede."

So much for Zeeland; and before we go farther let us see what it is we have discovered there. First, and chiefly, the metal band binding the hair, with the *voornaald* and other ornaments; in fact, the *ooryzer*.

Now the *ooryzer* is the most important piece of Dutch costume, because it is the most distinctive in itself, and because it is essentially Frisian.

All head-dress is a development of the dressing of the hair, of which the modes are innumerable but the general principles few. One of the earliest necessities in regard to it is to prevent it flowing over the eyes, and to prevent that you can plait it and lace it and coil it, or you can simply bind it in position or cut it off. If binding is the mode, the band becomes stiffer, and in time is fashioned out of metal. And that is the *ooryzer* in the earliest of its forms, as you have it in the collection in the museum at Leeuwarden: a band of reed or ozier for binding the hair becomes, in course of time, a metal ring.

At Leeuwarden can be seen the development of the *ooryzer*. The metal ring is cut, to adapt it more easily to its use, and then the ends are bent, that it may be fastened more securely on the forehead. In time the ring becomes of precious metal, and flattened in front, and there are added buttons (*knoppen*) on which to fasten the cap, and pins (*stiften*) wherewith to fix it on the

head, and other ornaments like the spirals or corkscrews, or the small, square *boeken*, and the *stukken*. With it was worn the frontlet, the *voornaald*, often jewelled. Generally, no doubt with the prosperity of the wearers, the *serre-tête* was fashioned in gold, and increased in size so as almost to cover the head. In this way was evolved the *ooryzer* or helmet which marks the head-dress of Friesland, Groningen, and North Holland.

Not of Zeeland, it will be observed. There the helmet is not worn. But the rudimentary band of gold is, and on occasion the *voornaald* also, and so are the *krullen* (which I venture to suggest may be a development of the horns and wire-stiffeners for the wimple; as, indeed, the *serre-tête* itself may be of the caul of gold net), and the *stiften*, all, as we have seen in Walcheren, with some and not others elsewhere. From which we conclude that the Frisian strain is found in the Zeelanders; but in them all is mixed, as other signs tell, with the Frankish, and possibly with a race still older: one place (Cadsand) being pure Saxon, and an exception to all its neighbours.

In the Westland, and also in the bulb-fields farther north, the gardeners do not wear any of the typical costumes. They dress for their work, that is to say, as you or I might dress to do the same work at home, except for their wooden shoes; and these are the correct wear all over Holland, even among people in whose family there never was a "costume," with which, indeed, wooden shoes have nothing whatever to do.

We may as well settle it quite clearly in our heads at once that costume will not survive its usefulness. Flapping-sleeves are not suitable for work in the fields; hence, I take it, the tight sleeves of the Dutch peasant women, though some distorted taste or fashion, and not necessity, explains the ugly constriction of the female arm here in Walcheren. It would seem that when



WOMAN OF STAPHORST, OVERYSEL.
(SAXON-FRISIAN). P. 182



MAN OF ZANDVOORT, NORTH HOLLAND
(COAST FRISIAN)



WOMAN OF THE ISLAND OF URK
(SAXON-FRANKISH-FRISIAN). P. 182



WOMAN OF THE ISLAND OF SCHOKLAND
(SAXON-FRANKISH-FRISIAN). P. 183

HERE IS ILLUSTRATED THE "MINGLE-MANGLE" OF DUTCH COSTUMES. THE MIXED DRESS OF THE STAPHORST WOMAN, FOR EXAMPLE, IS EXPLAINED BY A FRISIAN SETTLEMENT IN THE SAXON ZONE. (P. 182)

skating the Frisian girl overcame her scruples against flowing tresses. And, again, the Frisian women when digging bait on the wadden, dress, or at least dressed, for the business in trousers and big sea-boots. Moreover, there must be a certain amount of isolation where costume prevails. The multi-petticoated habit could not survive travel: it may defy the laws of health, but it must collapse at the demands of the Customs. And, therefore, apart from special reasons for its absence in their case, costume is not likely to be found, and is not, among those engaged, as the gardeners of South Holland are, in a highly organised industry involved in traffic with the world without.

The costumes we are out after, be it remembered, are those of mediæval times, distractingly modified in the process of descent without a doubt, but unmistakable in their lineage nevertheless. Step over to Delft, for example: the boer women of the wealthier class round it are found wearing a gold helmet. But elsewhere in South Holland, as in Delfland itself, except in these richer farms, the head-dress is the linen cap with turned-up peaks, called *oreilles*. (In some of the islands of South Holland, I may remark, the metal head-dress is covered entirely by the cap, which leaves visible only the spiral pins or the buttons.) This peaked cap of Delfland—perhaps the most attractive model, and for that reason the best known abroad—is most likely a modification of the Frisian head-dress, of which the helmet, of course, is the essential feature. It has a pedigree of several centuries; and its presence in its pure form in this little colony in a cap-wearing Province suggests inevitably that it came here in an early migration of Frisians.

At the Hague and at Delft we may have seen the girls of the Orphanages, but I have purposely left their

costume until we should come to Amsterdam, to compare it with that of the even better-known Orphanage of that city. The last is situated in the Kalverstraat, with an entrance in the Luciensteeg, and its inmates in their red-and-black dress are among the best-known features of the city's spectacle. These colours, I am informed, have nothing to do with the town's colours; if that is so, many Amsterdammers are living under an illusion. What the mediæval significance was that they are supposed to have, I do not know. This Burger-Weeshuis was instituted in 1520, half a century earlier, that is, than the Roman Catholic Maagdenhuis, close by the Spui.

More interesting for us at this moment than their dress is the head-dress of the orphans. Previously their copper *ooryzers* belonged to the house, and they were laid aside for silver ones which the girls bought for themselves. From this it is concluded that at the time of the foundation of the orphanages, early in the sixteenth century, the *oorzyzer* was the usual dress of the burgher maids. Amsterdam, a city of no great antiquity, was only a century or two before that a fisher-village, and that it was Frisian (as the evidence of this *oorzyzer* suggests) is only as might be expected of any fisher-village along the North Sea, from Sweden to Grevelingen.

In the Roman Catholic Maagdenhuis the *oorzyzer* is seldom or never in use now, but the usual signs of its earlier presence are found in the silver buttons in the *mutts*.

I believe you will find both silver and copper *ooryzers* in the Hague Orphanage, which was founded in 1564; at any rate, you will find *ooryzers* in it, and can be sure of a Frisian tradition strong in the city of the counts. In Delft, on the other hand, the casque has degenerated into a few silver plates; but again the

buttons (but not the pins) of the original *ooryzer* survive.

Thus in other parts of the country besides Zeeland the *serre-tête* has disappeared, leaving behind remembrances of its wear in the buttons of gold, just as the vanished sword-belt of the days when private gentlemen wore swords is still kept in remembrance by the two supporting buttons sewn on the back of our coats.

It has disappeared in Scheveningen, close by, for another example, where the fisher-women are wearing very clean white caps; but over hair cut close upon the neck, which immediately suggests another head-dress; and surely enough in their houses you would find the casque in which they will appear on Sunday. About the women of Zandvoort—Haarlem's seaside village—my notes disclose nothing, except that when met in the dunes they are walking barefoot, but carrying the sabots which the Haarlem magistrates compel them to put on before entering the towns. But among them also, I believe, the *ooryzer* still appears.

We are, however, at Amsterdam, and pushing northwards for Alkmaar; and in the steam-tram thither have time to examine on the firm-set head of a brown-faced, brown-haired, brown-eyed, elderly boerin, a yellow straw hat (in this case trimmed with blue) of the beautiful, turned-up North-Holland model. The whole appearance of head and hat in colour and ornament is perfect; it has something in it of the orderly distinction of the North-Holland farmhouse. Alkmaar itself is full of pitfalls in respect of its costume; its local peculiarities have always been marked, and, moreover, much commented on, the type and its variation often changing places in these descriptions. That difficulty need not trouble us, however, since we are concerned only with the main principles, and particularly at this moment with the *yzzer*. That cannot be better

studied than in the shop windows of Alkmaar, where, without impertinence, you can examine all its parts at leisure.

Those who will to Marken maun to Marken, and they can see there, if they know to look, one of the most interesting examples of the mingle-mangle of costume. For though the Marken woman wears no *ooryzer*, the Markeners are pure Frisians. The noticeable thing about her is the stuffs of which her dress is composed; they are elaborate, and would need to be good, for many of them are no longer in the market. For example, the bobs or *kwastjes* of her neckerchief, which some believe to be old cloister work, have been known to bring twenty-five shillings per piece in the auction-room. The general character of this costume, as has been said, is pure Frisian, yet it is Frisian with the essential *ooryzer* left out; the only example of this which is to be found, now that the still better-known Hindelopen dress has been extinct (outside of the museums) for a third of a century. The women on the island, except on wedding and christening days, or in their gala costume at Easter, say, wear the same dress Saturday and Sunday, but not so the men. They also exhibit their Frisian type in their round, low, felt hats; they have, when we see them at work, a dash of red at the shirt-neck, with buttons of gold, and wear fairly spacious breeches. The tourist delights to notice that boys and girls are dressed alike until the age of five. Then, on going to school, the boy is put into breeches; but until seven his hair is uncut, and, generally, he and his sister appear very much alike.

THE SAXON *KORNET*

So long as we had the *ooryzer* in view, which in a general way of speaking was all the way to Friesland, we



MARKEN GIRL : FROM 2 TO 7 YEARS



MARKEN BOY : FROM 2 TO 5 YEARS



MARKEN BOY : AT 6 YEARS



MARKEN BOY : ABOVE 7 YEARS

THIS PAGE ILLUSTRATES THE SIMILARITY IN DRESS OF MARKEN BOYS AND GIRLS UP TO THEIR SEVENTH YEAR. (P. 180.) VARIOUS STUFFS IN MARKEN COSTUME ARE NO LONGER MANUFACTURED OR ON THE MARKET; THE COSTUME, THEREFORE, MUST SOON DISAPPEAR

were on a definite line of search. Leeuwarden now is the turning-point. In Groningen the *voornaald* never has diamonds, whereas in Leeuwarden it is never worn without them. But while the *ooryzer* is worn in Groningen, and in the Reformed Orphanage there it crowns a green costume, there is a Roman Catholic Orphanage also, in which, surmounting a costume of blue, is a Saxon head-dress. Groningen, with Frisians all round it, yet bears the traces of Saxon origin. And very soon, as we strike south, we are among the wearers of Saxon costume.

It was here that the houppelande, already sufficiently lamented, was to have been a kind of marker, sent out to give us direction. As it is, the cornet, of poor but respectable ancestry, must be promoted for the duty.

Evelyn speaks of it: "A cornet with the upper pinner dangling about her cheeks, like hounds' ears," which is very graphic, if not convincing. Mrs. Earle, who writes of American dress, cites "four cornet caps with lace—£1, 3s.," from the wardrobe of a Madam Jacob de Lange, clearly Dutch; and she describes these caps as having "two points like broad horns, over which gauze or lace was spread,"—the old wimple over points: but was the cornet ever so?

Our *kornet* is simply described as a cap, generally of lace gauffered in front, with a piece of lace behind covering the neck, and a white ribbon crossed over and round the head, and fastened with pins. A band holds the hair under the cap, but not a metal band, and so the ornaments appertaining to the *ooryzer*, which we have seen often surviving that head-dress, here put in no appearance. We find the *kornet* where, being Saxon, we expect to find it,—in Drente, Overysse, the Veluwe, and the Betuwe; as well as in places down in North Brabant, for example, and at Cadsand, where we do not.

This cap, as is always told of it, was at one time a

head-dress peculiar to the women in the households of Dutch clergymen; in the earlier period his wife wore it, in a later, the nurse-maid. Maskamp's "Burger-lady going to Church" has it on, which fixes it for the very first years of last century: *Son bonnet rond de mousseline, bordé d'une dentelle monté sur de la carcasse et plissée bien délicatement et bien symétriquement, et par dessus ce bonnet qu'on appelle cornette, une coiffe de gaze noir qui s'attache sous le menton.* The lady's daughter, who is attending her, has discarded the *corps de baleine*, and is really very smartly dressed, and on her head is a *kornet* of a modified construction. Ultimately, and until a few years ago, this cap was worn by many maid-servants, chiefly nurses, who presumably were preferred when they came from Guelderland or the highlands.

Quite as typically Saxon is the black, close-fitting "bonnet" with ostrich feathers, worn by young girls in certain places; in Staphorst, a few miles beyond Meppel, on the way to Zwolle, for example, and in Bunschoten. Staphorst is quite interesting. The *ooryzer* affected there comes so low as to make an impression on the cheek; but more noticeable is the wearing of an *ooryzer* at all. For in Staphorst we are in Overijssel, which certainly is not Frisian, and, as we have just seen, the Saxon bonnet is worn in it. But a Frisian settlement on one of the fen-colonies there explains the anomaly.

A little farther north, and in the centre of the Zuider Zee, is Urk, the island of "immoderate great breeches." Urk, as it appears on the map to-day, seems well within the Frisian zone, but in all likelihood it formed a part of the present Overijssel territory before the Zuider Zee came into existence. Bearing that in mind, we can explain the mixture of characteristics in costume.

I will note two peculiar customs of women's dressing in this island. The first is that her initials and those of

her sweetheart (she having one) are inscribed or sewn upon her *kraplap*, which is just the Zeeland *plastron*, characteristically embroidered. The other is, that in Urk "once a widow, aye a widow," so far as widow's weeds go. These are worn even after her remarriage, and part of them (and of them only) is a hat, which is also worn indoors. The eye of the stranger, lighting upon the *karrepoes*, the lambskin cap on the Urker's head, discovers the oldest form of male headgear in Holland. It appears to be one of the general principles of national costumes that the head-dress, the longest to survive in the case of the women, is the first part to disappear in the case of the men. This cap, in one or other form, was worn, it seems, by almost all Dutch fisher-folk. It is now found only in Urk, Volendam, Harderwyk, Schokland, and one or two islands of Zeeland. I was told—I may have been wrongly informed—that when youths from any of these places enter the Netherland navy, they are given the "head-covering of the Scottish Highlanders," which I took to mean the busby.

What has been noted of the geographical position of Urk is necessarily more assured of Schokland, which is now inhabited only by the officials of the Waterstaat in charge of its sea-defences. Fifty years ago, or so, the islanders were deported, and settling in Kampen, Vollenhoven, and other villages on the mainland, have become absorbed by their new neighbours. Their children dressed as the children about them dressed; they themselves wore out their inheritance of ancient costume, and died in it, and it and they disappeared together.

Our observations from this point onwards become, like the objects of them, a "mingle-mangle." Racial purity has been lost, Saxon, Frank, and Frisian being inextricably mixed until we come to Utrecht, and go

south to North Brabant, where the Frank may still be found without alloy. As far as costumes go, however, we have lost distinctions, and perhaps to say that in the Roman Catholic provinces there is the greatest taste in dress, and most distinction in the wearing of it, is a sounder generalisation than any we can base on race.

CHAPTER XV

IN THE GARDENS

FROM the boat at the Hoek of Holland you step out upon the Westland, famed of old for its market-gardening. Tucked, in a suave climate, behind the dunes, from over which the sand is blown to make a subtle mixture with its light clay, it is encroaching with its new culture farther and farther upon the meadows of Delfland; for the Westland, partaking in the general revival of Dutch agriculture, has gone in for intensive gardening, and in a few years has established one of the particular agricultural industries of Holland, of which I propose that we make a tour.

The green glint of the sun on glass sparkles throughout it. Seen from a distance, the rolled matting of its frames cause the villages to appear as if they were built on huge lumber rafts. The gardens show their recent development, hectare added to hectare, and glass added to glass, filling up odd corners, here with cucumbers or gherkins, there perhaps with French beans, as the skill of the grower reaped a profit on easily borrowed money. Elsewhere, orderly nurseries of grapes, great stretches of glass evidently planned of a piece, are testimony to the success established in the countryside.

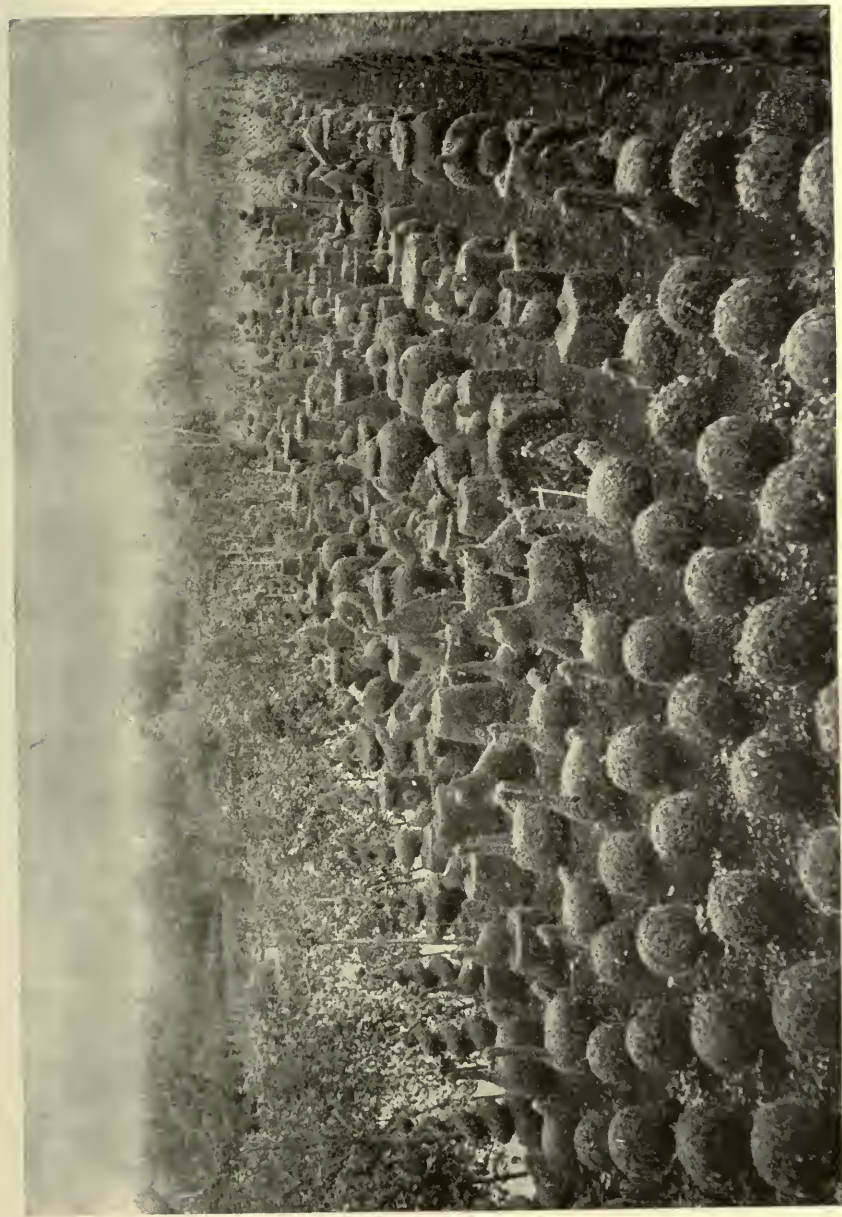
The growers, less picturesque than business-like, rub shoulders in their industry with men of other countries,

and have the eagerness of those who have tasted their first success. For furthering their interests they have united in an inevitable Bond: they co-operate to buy their Schiedam manure and nitrates; and to provide the regular market, by which alone their trade must flourish, they have built auction-rooms, whither in the busy days of spring and summer is brought by canal and high road the produce of the smaller gardens for sale to the German and other buyers. That of the larger is steam-trammed to the Hoek, to be shipped to the English market.

Thus the Westland grower, his wife and household, live among the fruit and vegetables to which their talk follows their thoughts inevitably. Tomatoes colour all their hopes. Their fortunes are staked on their asparagus. Their ambitions are set on the early strawberry, and they dream of the peach in the first months of spring which brings a shilling at Covent Garden.

As all the Westland talks tomatoes—and Aalsmeer and Boskoop flowers and shrubs (as we should hear had we time to turn aside to them)—so does all Hillegom talk bulbs. I take Hillegom (which I happen to know) as typical of a countryside that for two months in the spring is surely unlike any other in the world. It stretches from Lisse to Bloemendaal, but its special culture straggles south to Zeeland, and can be traced northwards to Alkmaar. These patchwork miles of varied colours—white, cream, ultramarine, deep indigo, claret, scarlet, red, rose-madder, salmon, saffron,—in a word, all the shades that can be achieved by mixing the rainbow's hues—make, truly, something indeed unimaginable.

The blooms, excited by the bright sunshine, fly out at one with an astonishing fierceness. There is something a little grotesque and even monstrous in the



FORMAL GARDENING: A SPECIAL CULTURE IN THE AALSMEER NURSERIES



appearance of these bulb fields. If one came upon them unawares, not knowing what to expect, he would hardly believe that they were growing flowers. The blooms mass so solidly and uniformly, and have so compact a vividness, yet, withal, so subtle a harmony—the scarlets and mottled saffron and flesh of the tulips, the profound purples of every shade, with the lavender and ripe cream and dead white of the hyacinths—that one thinks at once of fabrics or fayence. But the richest brocades are without the brilliancē of the tulips gleaming between the bare hornbeam hedges with the life of the sun itself that beats on them; and when night falls the hyacinth colours are veiled under a tender enamel such as the rarest blue of China or of Delft cannot match.

I do not say that to this aspect of his industry the Dutch bulb-grower is oblivious. Take my acquaintance Mr. Pietersz, for example. (That, I may remark, is not his name.) Mr. Pietersz was quite sympathetic to my ecstasies on the morning we rode past hillocky Bennebroek to Haarlem to see the National Flower Show there. At the same time he gave me to understand that the fields are not planted for artistic effect, and at the exhibition afterwards, as earlier in the morning in his own gardens, his appreciation of the blooms seemed to me to be limited to their professional points. I would salute with respectful language “the ingenious delight of Tulipists,” but I do not pretend to understand it.

Mr. Pietersz, however, told me, or put me in the way of learning, other things more to my present purpose. For instance, Bulb-land, it seems, has rather a poor opinion of the Westland, Pomona’s Garden, which may grow the crocus and narcissus, and even the tulip, but cannot achieve the hyacinth, which one admits is the

crown of the culture. I fancy, at the same time, that it rather simulated the indifference it showed to the tale of 300,000 tomatoes and one million kilo of grapes grown in the rival *streek* which I brought from Loosduinen. Again, both are largely Roman Catholic; "but," said my Protestant informant, "my master, who is one, doesn't let that influence him in engaging his men, and he allows us to observe our own holidays." Those in Hillegom who are not Roman Catholics are Antirevolutionnair, he added—he himself, of course, being Liberal: it is a curious fact that it is almost always Liberals who impart you information in Holland. If I were to judge by his followers whom I have discovered, I should consider the cult of Dr. Abraham Kuyper a myth. And that, as we shall see, would be a great mistake.

This, however, was a conversation by the way, outside the barn door, while Mr. Pietersz was inside giving some orders for the afternoon. These bulb-barns, with their curious earthy-woody smell, emanating, I suppose, from the store-trays stacked to their roofs, are sometimes accretions of sheds, that are quite picturesque in their accidental grouping, but there is nothing about them, any more than about their owners, which one can call characteristically Dutch. I should sum up both as clean, business-like, efficient, and ready to exchange their present worldly estate for a better. Here, of course, I am speaking of the enterprising "big men," those whose erections of brick barns on the latest model, springing up everywhere, testify to their assurance that their *bloeytyd*—the "boom" in their business—is going to last. The race—at present, at least: Holland's moral is all against the short view—is for those strong men, the exporters.

I gathered on the spot that it is they, and not the

other class of cultivators which grows for them, who make the culture pay. And I am bound to report the opinion, also from the spot, that some who popularly push an export trade are rather "giving the show away" (the "show's" own phrase) by delivering inferior stuff. The gardener at home will tell you that if you wish a good bulb, English or Dutch, you must pay for it, but that many of his clients, with auction-room prices in view, imagine it is to be had for little or nothing, with consequent disgust in the growing of hyacinths. Dutch trade in many branches has been lost in the foreign market in the past by a policy which I shall be content to call short-sighted. In saying this, I am only repeating what Dutchmen themselves assert in much less mincing terms, and am bringing no charge against the bulb-exporters as a class. Nor is there any reflection upon them, or upon the generation of keen, enterprising traders to which they seemed to me to belong, by judging them merely on the low level of business men, who know that honesty is the best commercial policy.

The large bulb-grower is "not only a lord of gardens, but a manuell planter thereof." He has long contacted with the outer world. If he is of the younger generation he is probably a product of the higher-burgher school, and to the French he has learned there has added some English, and more than a little German. He frequently travels in foreign countries, and, at any rate, men of foreign countries journey to visit him. I have seen him one of a cosmopolitan group, each member of which was a household name in Hillegom, and wherever bulbs are grown. That was in spring, and at the Exhibition time, when the countryside was in carnival, and that "thrang" canal road between Haarlem and Amsterdam, crowded with vehicles of

every kind "from a high-grade motor to a Tate sugar-box on wheels" (will this, I wonder, meet the eye of the chance fellow-traveller whom I quote?), reminded me of Newington Causeway on a Derby day with a favourite wearing the colours of S. Hyacinthus.

For the bulb is a national industry, and the grower is justified in his pride of lineage. He is the aristocrat among Dutch gardeners. And without unduly exalting him—he is a capable enough player on his own trumpet—we may regard him as showing the way which one sanguine Dutchman at least has pointed out to me as that the boers are all likely to take.

When they have emerged from their shell, according to his prediction, they will be as little like their fathers as those gardeners are like themselves, but while they are to take off their hats to science, they are not to have lost their respect for experience. Something of their picturesqueness of course must go, but their tradition is to remain. Their lives will approximate more nearly to the townsmen's, but they will not have lost their profound love for the soil.

To which I can only answer, a little desperately, more than a little illogically, that when the prosperous Mr. Pietersz had finished giving his orders, and carried me far afield into this domain of bulbs, I found that all the growers in it were not "big men," and that in the making of "big men" a great many little men have to be sacrificed. I am not thinking of the labourers, but of certain small cultivators pointed out to me as "bound to go to the wall," who with wife and children live a life as hard as any labourer's to preserve the field, or two, from so surely slipping away from them. Theirs, of course, is the little man's case everywhere. The struggle for life is no harder because it is carried on among crocuses and daffodils and *somer sotttekens*. When the fight is so

strenuous to keep the sand compacted on the bulbs, there is no time for sentimental reflections on the waste of beauty in the cut hyacinths that manure and mat it. But every one tells me that this small gardener loves the bulb if not the bloom, and at any rate he has in his blood the Dutch countryman's passion for his own hectare.

These sombre reflections, forcing themselves upon the delirium of tulip-land in May, are to be laid to the account of Mr. Israel Querido. Mr. Querido, who is an Amsterdammer, has written a novel (which may be read in an English translation) descriptive of the life of the market-gardeners of Kennemerland, immediately north of where it is cut by the Ymuiden canal. Theirs is no special culture under glass, nor has it the distinction of the bulb-industry farther south, in which it takes only a straggling part. Besides tulips and narcissi and hyacinths, their gardens show peas, beans, spinach, asparagus, radishes, carrots, cabbages, lettuce. They are—those, that is, among the market-gardeners of whom Mr. Querido writes—essentially representative of the "little men." Yet among them also has been developed a particular culture, notorious all over Holland, that of the strawberry, the gathering of which sums up in three feverish, driving weeks of July the labour and anxiety of the round of the year. I believe that there are some 625 acres in this corner of North Holland under strawberries, and the produce is sold in advance to big local contractors, who in turn re-sell it to salesmen in Germany.

It was some weeks after reading the novel at Hillegom that I paid a visit to Beverwyk, the harbour and centre of Mr. Querido's Wiereland. I was still too early for the strawberry crop, of which the very first baskets, with some early asparagus, were shown to me as

a special prize in one of the stores on the quay. I thus missed seeing this extreme example (as I suppose one is right in considering it) of the grind of the great, competitive, commercial machine when it is introduced suddenly into the *platteland* of Holland.

But, as a matter of fact, the strawberry-picking is only one incident in the life of Wiereland. The novelist describes with remarkable detail the round of the year among the little gardeners of this region. Their gardens are partly rented, partly owned. The grey earth on the tenacious, gurgling clay is trenched and broken with sweat. Mist rises from the fields like steam. Work in them breeds ague. Wind and rain roars among the dunes like thunder, and the roads and lands inside them are sodden and a slimy morass. A grey, sullen gloom lies over them. Spring is a joy too often chilled with damp. The fever of work engendered in it alone carries the growers on against the knowledge of mounting debt. Caterpillar gets into the cabbage and strawberries; continuous rains ruin the fruit; thunder-storms cut the beans to shreds. And all through the summer the gardeners are hard at work through a thirteen-hour day, grubbing nose to earth, fingers worn blunt like the points of their sabots.

The home life pictured amid these hard physical conditions is one of sordid misery. Pease-pudding, onions and potatoes, rye-bread and cheese, black-pudding, is the food. Coffee, and again coffee, is the drink, and then gin. The family sleep in beds in the walls, with doors; the one girl in the open living room. Cows are housed under the same roof, their lowing at night disturbing or lulling the sleepers, according to their conscience. Hard work in the gardens alternates with hard drinking in the taverns. The kermis is an orgy. The conditions of existence are poverty-stricken, immoral,

coarse, hopeless. "The nurserymen are swallowing up the whole place," is the complaint; and doctor, notary, banker, together with the burgomaster, batten on the peasant.

That is Mr. Querido's picture, not mine. I cannot but reflect that mine, had I depended on all I saw at Beverwyk and in the villages around, would have been, if not idyllic, at least pencilled in the sober and silver of tenacious and successful industry, not in this gloom, and that my palette elsewhere may be therefore altogether wrongly spread.

I do not think it is—certainly not altogether. Wiereland is, I believe, for the reason I have indicated, an extreme example, and Dutch opinion is not all agreed, so far as I inquired and found an opinion on the point, that, even so, it is as sombre as it is depicted in *Menschenwee*. Some—Liberals again—told me that the author is a Socialist, and is only following a usual Socialist practice of seeking out the worst, and representing it as the normal. But I am not prepared to accept unreservedly Dutch (or any other) Liberal estimate of Socialism. It is a little fearful. Others—not all Liberals—have said to me that it is quite likely that Mr. Querido's picture truly represents the facts.

The night I returned to Amsterdam from Beverwyk, I fell in with some English friends just arrived from a tour round the lowlands. They were in a mixed mood of amazement and depression. What an industry and thrift and prosperity everywhere! And how slack and spendthrift and depressed their own country across the North Sea. I could not deny the harvest, and the spring, and the evident success—and I wondered how our Dutch companions at the table relished their ascription to Protection! With protected Germany clamouring for Beverwyk's fruit, its middlemen pressing for delivery, and

masters goading their workers, and the pickers stimulating one another! But Mr. Querido's book was an excellent correction to any illusions about the underlife of that traffic which gives to many corners of Holland the appearance of an Eastern bazaar.

CHAPTER XVI

ON THE MEADOWS

IT is when we come off the gardens and step upon the meadows that we discover the Dutch boer proper. Those meadows and those cows which the stranger is reproached for regarding as comprising the whole country ! Well, they comprise a good deal of it. Five million acres nearly of permanent meadow (to say nothing of the grazing land, which the Dutch count as arable) carrying perhaps two million cattle, a full million of them milk-bearing cows. That is not an inconsiderable part of Holland.

I cannot avoid a few figures here ; they shall be made as round and to the point as accuracy will allow. The butter production of Holland is 64 thousand tons, that of cheese, 80 thousand. Much of the butter is made in factories ; all but some 20 thousand tons, to be exact. Further, comparatively little of that 20 thousand is carried to market. The auction-rooms swallow up most of it. Half the cheeses—practically all of the Edam kind—are produced in the factories, and those still made in the farms are for the greater part sold to the wholesalers through commissionaires, or “bookers,” who come round and buy up the weekly supply. All this means that, particularly in the case of butter, but also in that of cheese, the strain of work in the farms has been considerably slackened.

Still, there is the milk that goes to the production of those 150 thousand tons of dairy produce, and there are the sixty millions of that production which come out of the farms. A further point has to be noted by the way. Of the turn-over of the factories in butter (of the cheese I have not the figures), over seventy per cent. comes out of co-operative concerns run by the boers themselves. Now consider that this enormous industry, confined to six months of the year, is spread over all the Provinces; because the Hollands and Friesland are not alone in it, but more and more the farmers on the sand, for example, are becoming rearers of cattle, and growing crops only for their upkeep. And consider, further, that in all of them the farms run small, and are worked by the farmer and his family, with whatever hired help they must have, and how much of the labour of it all falls on the wife, and the narrowness of the margin of profit that there can be at best to many of them. Amplify the reflection, in a direction that to me seems irresistible: How many of the round six million inhabitants have to be up with the sun, week-day and holy-day, to do that milking!

It begins to be plain, how closely bound up are innumerable homes in Holland with the fortunes of those meadows and cows.

I shall draw upon my recollection of days spent among them last summer, in order to give a glimpse of the life and industry of these dairy farmers. But in the first place, a word or two, or even more, ought to be said of their homes.

The construction of the Dutch farmhouses is a subject upon which the late Professor Gallée, who had made it his own, more than once entertained me. He explained, for example, that the type down in Zeeland, for all the differences it showed from that in the north-

west, was nevertheless distinctly Frisian, and that both the resemblance and the contrast were exactly such as might be expected in the farms of a Frisian people, settled in an arable, not a cattle-rearing, country. Dutch farms, in a word, like Dutch costumes, had for him a significance, as indicating the origin and fortunes of the race who occupied them.

His theory will develop itself as we proceed. In regard to the dairy farms more particularly it tells us, briefly, this.—

The Frisian type is a building with low walls and a high-pitched pyramidal roof, standing four-square to all the winds that can blow—so bitterly—over the dike upon the treeless meadows. You find it most pure in Friesland and North Holland, and with different modifications elsewhere (as in Zeeland, we have seen), whither the Frisian race has wandered. No traveller in Holland can have forgotten its beautiful, orderly lines. I seem to remember it at its finest in a score of examples on the way between Enkhuizen and Hoorn—"The Streek," *par excellence*,—near by Blokker; their formality, and perhaps an excessive neatness of surrounding and appointment, relieved by the flushed grey in a summer night of their irregular thatch.

I have mentioned them, while writing of them here, to an old lady, who tells me she remembers spending winter holidays in such a North-Holland farm, when a girl, sixty years ago. She has recalled for me a long *deel*, or threshing-floor, with a passage, kept perfectly clean, down the centre, next a trench beside the stalls in which stood the cows, with the calves and horses beyond, Frisian fashion, heads to the outer wall.

On the opposite side were the box-beds of the servants, of whom there were several. The owner was one of the "warm" North-Holland boers. Yet the

family lived at the fore-end of the *deel*, with no partition between them and the cattle; it was to recuperate in the warm fragrance of the byre that the sickly town child was sent there. The "best" room was never used, the front door never opened, all the exits and entrances were made by the barn door at the other end.

My informant's description fixes the type developed in a hay and cattle-rearing country, if we add to it, what, after all, is its main feature—hence the name of the "hay-stack house" by which it is sometimes called; the storing of the hay and grain under the thatch of the roof, steep-pitched for the purpose, which overarches all the farmer's goods and gear.

That is one, and the more characteristic, type of building in the cattle-rearing country. The other, in one or other variety, is a modification, developed on the grasslands, of the so-called Saxon farmhouse. Its chief feature is the cabin, on account of which it is known as the "halle" type. It is, in fact, one large cabin, the centre of which is the barn, while a kind of pent-house on either side, but under the same spread of roof, shelters the cows and the calves and horses. Along these pent-houses are side passages; with entrances in the same gable as that into the central threshing-floor. Some hay and grain is stacked on the rafters; but mainly the hay is ricked outside, and cart-sheds and piggeries are so many out-buildings, separate from the "halle"; thus presenting the chief contrast to the Frisian type.

I have not seen examples of the pure Saxon *boerderij*; in which there is no partition from end to end of the building, but the family occupy the *vlet* near the hearth, practically on the *deel*, to which the heads of the cattle are turned. In those I know, the living-rooms and kitchen are more or less separated from the *deel*, at

the end farthest from the door, and in some cases are considerably extended, after the latest plan.

It is a day at a farm of this type at the heart of the country—in Utrecht Province—that I wish to recall. Its extent is some 75 acres. Kooi, the boer, does a little horsebreeding, something is picked up from poultry, and no inconsiderable profit made out of an increasing trade in pigs. After Denmark and Prussia, Holland owns the largest number of pigs per acre of any country in Europe. All over it they are being reared for the German and other foreign markets, which seemingly never fail them, especially that of England for the tenderest porkers. The price is good, and freight is cheap; a farmer over at the Lek Dike quoted me some incredibly low rates of carriage by steamer from Schoonhoven to Rotterdam. In consequence, the condition and housing of his *varkens* is becoming the farmer's concern and pride. I have sometimes thought his children would be envious of his sucking-pigs, did their native taste relish abluent attentions. I met one man who washes his porkers with antiseptic. This, of course, will not be believed, any more than that I saw a Deventer boy playing on the street with a tip-cat sewn in flannel. I can only declare the literal truth of each experience.

On this 75-acre farm there are twenty-three cows, mostly of the black-spotted breed. This is fewer than usual, as it happens. The number of heads on the mixed farms here is considerably over one to every three acres. On the meadows in the Schiedam district it may run to three to every four, but that is exceptional. From the milk of the twenty-three, Vrouw Kooi makes six cheeses per day, seven days in the week, three morning and night. The cheeses are full-cream, of the Gouda type, running a little small, about 10 lbs. a-piece. Kooi does not bring them to market, but sells them on short contract to an

agent for an Amsterdam firm in the nearest town. He is getting 31 cents per Holland lb., which is nearly five-pence per pound English, and he is moderately cheerful.

The farm-building, as I have said, is of the Saxon or "halle" type, but with several of the most recent modifications. There is still standing, a little way off, nearer the dike, the old building of the older model, lower in the walls, with a handsome spread of oak roof, with eaves coming close down to the ground. The living-room in it, where Kooi tells me he was born, has been partitioned off, you can see, from the *deel* and the stalls, but the general plan is evident of the "halle," into which cows and calves and horses turned their heads as sharers with the humans of one shelter. Besides this old *schuur* there are detached buildings: cart-sheds and piggeries, and a hay-rick with its four stout oaken posts. In one of the sheds, where stands also a Utrecht wagon, built on ancient lines, a young stirk is stalled.

The living-rooms are in the front gable of the house, facing the river dike, entrance being given to them by a door in the long wall, leading into the vestibule which separates house from *deel*. They are sleeping rooms at most—mine is the *opkamer*, over the butter cellar—for the household uses the near end of the *deel* for eating and the midday slumber, practically the only indoor occupations at this season. The Koois do not, like some of their neighbours, use any of their outside buildings as a summer house. The cows have been out in the fields since the middle of April—this has been an early spring, and fodder was scarce; and the family have the whole *schuur* to themselves.

Traces of their occupation are seen in scattered children's garments, sabots, dishes, pots, plates, tins, and bottles: the table for meals drawn up near the door leading from the vestibule, with Kooi's chair close by.

Vrouw Kooi makes her day's darg of cheese at the other end, where the *schuur* and pent-house doors lead out into the yard. "Clarty, but cosy."

Kooi is a rather small, clean-shaven, circumspect and open man, Frankish in type, whose fathers have been boers here for generations. His wife, watchful and silent, came from Abcoude way, also of boer stock. They have three children, two of whom go to the lower school in the village, and have a healthy appetite for *lekkers* (sweets). The third is a youngster of four. I saw him asleep when I passed through one of the rooms this morning early. He lay, perspiring, on a kind of child's-cart close by the box-bed, tightly wrapped up over his day-clothes. I do not know if many children are swaddled in this manner now. The old Dutch custom of rolling up the babes like Ægyptian mummies, exposing the head, which Dr. Smollett elaborately explained is the only part that ought to be confined, will go out with the *baker*, a contemporary of Mrs. Sarah Gamp. I cannot say I have noticed excessive bandy-leggedness, or many cases of a hydrocephalus. But certainly all Amsterdam street boys give one the impression of suffering a reaction from some severe restriction of their limbs at an earlier age.

For the rest, the household consists of a farm hand (*knecht*) and a maid, the usual domestics on a farm of this size. Only unmarried ploughmen live on the farms; the labourers, as required, are drawn from the village. In this case Adriaan is a round-faced, smiling, rather slack-looking youth, for whose services Kooi pays £15, 13s. 8d. per year. He gets those of Grietje, the maid, for fifteen guilders a year less, and with them a bargain. His domestics, putting their keep at fl. 200 each, thus cost him from £60 to £70 per annum.

The morning is accompanied in by a fine drizzle of

rain, through which Kooi, the *knecht*, and the maid have already made their several ways to the milking. It is no especial virtue in me to follow them out, close upon their heels, at the rising of the sun. Nine o'clock last night found a household already "bedded" with the dusk, and myself in my *opkamer*, possessed of only a guttering dip against the coming night. Refreshed and comfortable in my bed in the recess—swung mattress, sheets spotless, the cover-lid of red-rose such as appears to mantle all slumbering Holland—I watched the dawn reveal the treasures of this "best room."

It came in through linen blinds, with a scalloped border of lace inlay, falling three-quarters over the window space and moving not up or down. In these fixed blinds, immutably a quarter up, I discovered the secret of that gaze of inevitable detachment which meets you on the faces of Dutch *boerderyen*.

Coming in grey and sharp over the dike, the dawn discloses a room of ordinary appointment, newish, solid, inelegant furniture on a drugget over stained boards, an epergne, a few small pieces of Workum ware, a framed print of Queen Emma, and the latest portrait of the Babe. It discloses also, by and bye, slowly, two fearsome coloured cards of proverbs or *spreekwoorden*, the sole decorations of the walls. I cannot keep my eyes off them up there. They fascinate me like the dominees in their pulpits, flanked by high pews in the spacious churches. I look round unconsciously for the brisk deacon with the collection ladle to interrupt the monotony of their unctuous gutturals. But only a Dutch nightingale sings in his peaty depths. In booming couplets about *Gezondheid* and *Godsdienstigheid*, their philosophy rolls over me from these cards in the accents of a preacher of the Doleerende kirk. I fly from it to the meadows where Kooi and his milkers, according to their lights, reconcile

the Antinomian doctrines of Geneva with a conviction of the saving grace of good farming works.

I come upon Kooi himself across the road from the plashing, tussocky meadows leading out from the homestead. The domestics must be in the fields farther off. The cows in an acre or two here have been called into a little enclosure alongside of the ditch. The little black bent figure sits on his low stool in the rain, eyes intent on the teats he manipulates, too absorbed in his work, not yet waked enough perhaps, to do more than "good-morning" me over his shoulder. Conversation must wait until all the milk has been got in, and I have returned from my first walk over to the dike, shaved, redressed, feel six-o'clock-ish, and on terms with the sun which has the good sense not to get up so soon.

In that earlier drizzle I met no one on the road, except a magpie that shot by me in among the willow-plantation. Here and there in the meadows and *boerderyen* a figure was sighted: a *knecht* and a maid "clarting" milk with a bowl, transferring it, I don't know why, from one pitcher to another; a boer feeding frisking calves; two men in vivid white, masons in Monday's moleskins, walking with (as it seemed in the shimmering grey) long strides along the shore outside the dike; all with the large movements and stealthy silences of the hour after dawn. I get with my walk a faint sourness in my nostrils, which I attribute to the butter and cheese industry that permeates the air. But I think now that it was ferment from the decayed bark of the willows, heaps of which lay in places on the road behind the villages, where all day, in some back-yard or garden, you can see the quick movement of stripping for the basket-making, carried on by the old hand-method.

When I got back, Grietje was coming down the east side of the meadow yoked with her two full pitchers, dirty and draggled with the work and the rain, all the glamour of the dairy-maid evaporated on a wet morning, 4.30 by the clock. By five, Vrouw Kooi had already commenced her prosaic but skilful labours, the art and practice of which have come down to her through generations of South Holland cheese-makers.

Twice this forenoon, while we tramped about these meadow-lands, an old picture of the seventeenth century reappeared before our eyes in a wonderful perfection of survival. In one of the most beautiful of their villages, passing through the back ways and *achter-huizen*, we were arrested by a startlingly familiar scene: a yard, with a woman and child in it caught in a lull of their domestic duties, and, beyond, a *gang*, or passage, with a figure silhouetted at the far end of it against the even, placid sunshine that flowed in at its open door. It was a Pieter de Hoogh, the "Courtyard of a House" in our National Gallery in the life.

The other reincarnation was still more curiously vivid, if less sensibly complete. Another friend and myself called at a farm where the boer, a youngish, frank, capable fellow, with the Dutchman's concentration and patience, but also the poise many Dutchmen lack, showed us some ingenious fruits of the agricultural revival. When we went indoors—the house also had been renovated—we sat down to talk at a table drawn clear from the window, in a room that was modern in its furnishing, and crude in its decoration—the lithograph of the Princess on the wall, for example—yet lofty, and singularly simple and distinguished in its general disposition.

There we were joined by the Vrouw. She was under middle age, younger than her sallow com-

plexion warranted, I fancy, tallish, spare, with refined shoulders, and dressed with the simplicity and austere fine line of early Victorian fashion. Her greeting, her manner of seating herself at the table beside us, her interpolations in the conversation flowing over local affairs between my friend and the boer, all had the accent of an extreme self-possession. She disappeared for a few moments later, to re-enter bearing a coffee tray. Still standing by the table, in the softened light of forenoon shut out by half-lowered blinds, she turned up the cups that stood inverted on the tray, dusting them with her black apron, that somehow one guessed was spotless, before sinking their transparency in the bean-black liquid, and handling them delicately in her long, fine fingers that matched their own fragility. I watched, fascinated, her slow, beautiful movements, the perfection of an animal, rather than of any artificial, refinement; and then I was aware that at the back of that impression was the other Pieter de Hoogh at home, with the transparent figure of the woman through whose skirt the background tiles push forward, and that behind that again was the whole range and spirit of the domestic art of the seventeenth-century Dutchmen which survives in a thousand such appearances of their country to-day.

CHAPTER XVII

IN THE FENS

I WISH the reader to imagine himself with me in a "terp" village in Groningen. Already a very kind and patient host has pointed out to us that the short way from the station to the village is an ascent right up to the church, with its narrowing Frisian tower, round which the houses cluster. Walk past it, and the descent begins, until at the last of the houses you are once again upon the plain, with its fields—no meadows more—of barley or rape. Continue round the hill, and you will see that in one place men are cutting into it,—great clay-covered fellows digging and wading in a grey-brown ooze. From the floor of the quarry the hillside, where they have sliced it down, rises to a height of some twelve or fifteen feet; solid, even clay, except for a foot or two at the bottom, in which you can distinguish, though faintly, another texture of soil, and even (when guided to them) traces of vegetation and human occupation.

Now our host will explain.

We are, you must know, on the old semi-submerged edge of the land, looking out to the Groningen *wadden*. Before any dike was built—and that was a thousand years ago—the natives of these regions made themselves "terps," mounds of clay dug from the surrounding meadows, to which they betook themselves for safety when the sea-floods threatened. The line of these

"terp" villages can be traced, following more or less that of the innermost (and earliest) dike, their houses clustered together, not straggling here and there, as in the later dike-sheltered hamlets. Many puzzles lie in these excavations. Who were the inhabitants, earlier than the "terps," who have left their traces at this thin, faint, joining layer on which the clay rests?

They had cattle, it appears, which is contrary to the witness of ancient explorers: did they live here all the year round? or were they nomads? And, again, those young willows springing up on the floor of the quarry, and not another willow to be found in the whole country round: have the seeds lain dormant a thousand years, waiting the light? No one knows, and it is not to find out that these spaders are digging into the secrets of a thousand years. "Terps" clay, it has been discovered, is precious, more fruitful far even than the fruitful *dalgrond* of the fen-colonies, whither it is being sent to grow potatoes to feed a gaping potato-meal mill.

We follow the story (so far as it is written) when later in the day our cicerone drives us from the "terps" to the *wadden*, another of the countryside's sights. First we cross the line of the earliest dike; a few ruins of its steep, inexpert construction remain visible. The way is through fields of grain, with here and there a farmhouse, or hamlet, until we cross another dike. More fields, and then a third dike, strong, massive, broad-based, green-grown on the inner side. The Watcher, the Dreamer, and the Sleeper, we may call them. The wide fields between the outermost, the Watcher and the Dreamer, are the reclamations of a hundred years; and outside them further reclamation is going on. We can walk out on the quaking soil, beside the draining ditches running north to the oozy margins flowing over on to hard sand.

Here also one day there will be green fields, pushed forward under a new protecting dike towards the white houses of the island of Rottumeroog, which are just visible in the sun across the shifting *wadden*.

In this day's expeditions we have been in touch with the two notable cultures of Groningen, if we take the clay of the "terps" as connecting the arable north with the fens of the east and south. The Groningen farmhouse may be said to approximate to the Frisian type in construction rather than in appearance, for its general principle is that of storing the forage and the grain under the same roof as the stock and the humans on the farm. But as the nature of the agriculture demands a greater space, the building, unlike the "hay-stack house," stretches out longwise, and the in-roofing of the residence, often shut off from the remainder of the structure by iron doors, is scarcely more than nominal; since, in fact, the *boerdery* adapts itself to farming conditions, it varies greatly with its location.

The one I have in view, with its really noble barn, is yet not pure in type, for the living house has been rebuilt; and perhaps with its old aspect has gone much that was characteristic in the lives of the inmates. Ten years ago I could write of a Zeeland *boerdery* bearing over the gateway a motto in Latin (the meaning of which the farmer knew very well); and of its sitting-room where there was a piano, from which all the musical mechanism had been removed, so that the case might be used as a cupboard. There was another still more handsome farmhouse I knew in the lowlands, where the family used the kitchen only for a sitting-room, and slept altogether in one bedroom. These things are to be found still, but not so commonly as then among boers with a large capital account. The scale of living, and still more the elegance of life, are approximating them-

selves to the income and the fortune, and that betokens a profound change.

It is one that is constantly startling societies, for complacent classes, living in a consciousness of distinction among their neighbours, awoken to find that all that gave themselves distinction can be bought; and though their pride may be hurt, their honour in few cases impels them to cultivate a nobler ideal than a large banking account.

Among the boers, it is only perhaps those of Groningen who could suggest these speculations. They have long enjoyed a repute that is no doubt justified by their estate as practical owners and successful farmers. Their farms are of more considerable size than in the other Provinces, as the traveller's eye ranging the country can tell. They hold them, too, on "beklemrecht," a kind of perpetual feu, with "accidents" on the side of the tenant,—the death of the boer, or the bringing home of a bride,—which is peculiar to Groningen alone. This "beklemming," it ought to be noted, with its provision against sub-division, does not involve the reclaimed fields outside the dike, which a great law-case many years ago decided to belong to the farmers of the adjoining lands.

Like all Groningers they have hard heads, and their great farming tradition is stated on an unusually fruitful soil. It is no mere traveller's tale that the stiffish clay of the Dollard has been growing crops for three hundred years without manuring. Wheat, barley, oats, peas, barley, clover, is the usual rotation, with two years' meadow, and the cows kept are not necessary for the soil. Though not all so rich as the Dollard, the whole north of the Province is a fine land, growing wheat, barley, rape-seed, flax, beans, peas, turnip, mangold, sugar-beet, mustard, colza, clover as the general rotation. Such are some of the conditions of the Groningen boer who has generally

been held up to, and consequently by, the stranger in Holland as a beacon in the *boerestand*.

His class, the high price of farming land (which, and not the low, is the danger ahead that the foreseeing fear) may specially threaten. One does hear of members of it leaving the farms to which they are linked by many generations, and making their homes in the towns.

These are largely matters of hearsay. I will only add to them that in my brief glimpse of a north Groningen *boerdery* I was wonderfully carried back thirty years, to others lying here and there behind the sea-board towns of Scotland. The fields, if you could forget the water boundaries here, were not dissimilar. The desultory gardens within stone walls in both were filled with the same grey yet kindly air. Despite the altering touches of centuries of widening tradition, the houses had not lost the aspect of the homes of a kindred people: blond, grey-eyed, brainy, and without artistry, blood-strangers both to the little boer on the Lek or the woman out of Pieter de Hoogh's canvas. The talk here ran on crops and the neighbours, and a son in foreign parts, as for certain it would be in Fifeshire. These big-boned lassies might have yoked the gig for a Kincardine market. I knew lads like the sons who whistled down the Eden water. The mistress—a little remoter, perhaps, than she I can think of across the sea and the years, who yet wore the same aspect of having sat long with Pain—entertained us, it seemed to me, with a little suffering, like one who knows as well as feels. And the boer, her man, took my fancy because of a dozen likenesses to a boer at home, and not least because he also has a deep zest in the game which both of them called the "dambrod."

The fen-colonies which we are to visit next lie to the south of Groningen and extend away down into

Drente, the province of waste lands. From Groningen to Koevorden almost, and from Meppel to Ter Apel, must be imagined a great stretch of heather. In the middle of this stretch is the moorland proper, with villages encircled by their strip of agricultural lands. The white, long-tailed sheep crop here all the year round, while the shepherds knit stockings as they tend them, and swarms of bees are brought to make honey in the heather when the colza season is over. It is impossible for one who has not seen it in the rainy season to imagine the desolateness of this moorland, when from the soft, slaggy roads the sodden heather stretches away like a vast foreshore of seaweed left by the tide; with tawny patches, and muddy and sandy hollows, and pools, and inland seas with rippling waves, and birch clumps here and there that loom like headlands through the mists. Beyond these sandy heaths, and also heather-covered when undug, are the high fens, the famous peat-lands.

The reader must understand, however, that the peat-beds of Holland are of two kinds. Hard peat, or *korte turf*, as the Dutch call it, is found in the low beds, lying below the normal *peil*. When the bed is opened, the peat is dug and kneaded and treaded and mixed into a paste, and then removed to straw spread upon the neighbouring ground, and so brought by the sun and the pressure of human foot, or occasionally by machinery, to a consistency at which further manipulation of it is possible; after that it is cut, stacked, dried, and ultimately sent to market. Such is the history of the fine hard peat that is used in the stoves of houses and in the footstools with which my lady keeps herself comfortable in church.

The exhaustion and non-draining of low peat-beds, often at the expense of fine agricultural land, was the

origin of many of the stretches of water—the inner waters—which covered the face of the Dutch lowlands in earlier days.

The high fens, again, are beds several feet in thickness, of peat of a lighter, softer, more fibrous nature. On moorland and fen, forests once existed. In time they disappeared. On the moorland sand they were cut for fuel or for building, fires blasted them, the north-west winds overturned them, the cattle turned out upon the ground stopped the growth of the younger timber. In the undrained, moister stretches, fen began to form. The roots of the oaks rotted, the great trees fell and lay, as they are found to this day, pointing to the south-east. Firs followed the oaks, and birches and alders the firs,—all of them to destruction; and then in place of trees came the undergrowth and the grasses and reeds.

The rotting vegetation fed the fen, and a brown gloomy marsh covered half a province. There were no roads across it. The villages on this side and on that were cut off from each other by weary, desolate, trackless regions, shunned by animals and untrodden by men. Such, three hundred years ago, was the fen that stretched unbroken from near Groningen down the east of Drente to its south-east border, and encircled the moorland fringes of Friesland and Overijssel. There are tracts of it here and there in Drente still to aid the fancy in picturing how this whole region looked a century or two ago. But except in them, you would not dream that desolation ever brooded over it, for the marshes are reclaimed and under the greenest of green crops, the canals that intersect them are crowded, and in the long streets of the fen-colonies there is stir and traffic. This is one of the wonders of Holland.

The better to exhibit it in its latest developments I will link them with some impressions of a visit to a high

peat-bed on the Drente border which I made several years ago.

A short railway journey from Groningen ended at Zuidbroek, where a horse-car stood ready to carry us to Veendam, and so on through the fen-colonies. Veendam even then I remember as one long, never-ending street, or rather as an interminable canal lined by interminable single buildings set next to one another,—houses, shops, a church or two, a school; with the fields beginning immediately behind them; and when at last the conductor announced that here was Wildervank, there had been no break in the row to mark that Veendam itself was left behind.

Somewhere beyond Wildervank, but where exactly I was not certain, there lived a farmer, one of the clever Drente fen farmers, I had been informed, among whom reside the highest agricultural skill and enterprise in the country. To him I was to present myself with an informal introduction. I was to mention a name that (so I was assured) would be "open sesame" to his good graces, and was then to say, "Sir, I have come through divers perils by land and water near to the end of the world here, to see a high peat-bed, and if you do not assist me then shall my travail have been in vain."

With this weighing a little heavily on my mind, I was borne as far as the tram-car would take me, which was still along an unbroken line of village; then, alighting, was directed to a destination, estimated by the Dutch method of calculation to be distant "one hour walking." The way was not uninviting. The hot bright monotony of the landscape was varied by vicious rain-clouds that gathered and broke in a flood of shadow. In the fields around were the green and golden proofs of the clever Drente farming: and its material rewards seemed indicated by the handsome farmhouses facing the road,

each, within its enclosure and little cluster of sheltering trees, having the air of a mansion. At length the one owned by the Unknown pointed itself out to me, and before I realised my rashness I was reciting to him my extraordinary tale.

The pass-word did not appear to be immediate "open-sesame." As I approached his front door, I had seen the farmer seated at a little window-nook that commanded the bridge spanning the canal from the road to the gateway, his unwavering eye upon it, the ruminant pipe between his lips. Now as I stood before him on his doorstep—for he had opened for me himself—that eye was upon me as unwaveringly, while he bade me repeat the talismanic name, and inquired, with long, pondering puffs between, the manner and the purport of my journey.

Then, suddenly, he threw open hospitable portals, and set me down before a cigar-box at a table in a large and stark *huiskamer*, while he departed, clearly to get into the suit of tweeds he had abstracted from the cupboard at my back. Returning duly, having shed a little of the patriarch, I thought, with his broadcloth, he brought me through his kitchen—usual ingress and exit—past cowhouse, pig-shed, stable, right out to his fields, where he scraped away the few inches of soil with his fingers, getting down on his knees to do it, so eager was he to show me the sand and peat admixture in which his fine barley was rooted. Then, behind a horse of Guelders breed, lightly harnessed in his gig, we were off to the high peat-bed.

It lay at the end of a two-hours' drive, and the ultimate black, terrifying steppe in the world it seemed. Entering upon it, drained though it was, the foot sank deeper at every stride, and the imagination pictured the horror and despair of the forwandered wagoner of

earlier times when he found himself and his horses and cart sinking slowly into that infernal moss, where the antiseptic peat would preserve his bones till the digger of later days should rake them out.

A hundred yards in front of us, where the horrid black tumuli of peat are thickest set, there is a digger at work. He is a swank man, middle-aged, clean-shaven; his coat is off; besides his shirt he wears tight knee-breeches and green stockings,—blue stockings weather-stained to green. His shoes have flat, extended soles, to prevent his sinking in the sloppy hole in which he works. His curiously shaped spade has a blade the breadth of a peat, and sharper than the north wind that whistles across the moor in spring. With it, with practised skill, he slices through the pulpy bed; first vertically, standing upon the level of the moor, then, down in the pit, horizontally; next with the same spade he lifts the peats, one by one, and flings them in perfect order upon the open barrow beside him. When it is filled the barrow is wheeled up to the stack, and by a deft movement capsized so that the cubes fall in an orderly heap. So the peat is dug from the bed to a depth of several feet.

A rain squall scurries across the moor, and we take shelter in lee of one of the stacks of drying peat. The cubes, as the moisture evaporated, have shrunk to a third of their original size, and are estimated at ten thousand to the stack. This leads me to the calculation (unimportant now) that this man, digging hard in the season, from the middle of March to the end of June, may make from ten to fifteen guilders a week. He has been out on the moor since four this morning, and will not leave it until six to-night. He brings his coffee with him; his coffee-pot is kept warm on the little tuft of burning peat yonder, from which a wisp of smoke

battles with the rain. Lying near him is his little tin of oil, with which he rubs his hands to keep them from cracking.

"How many diggers are there in the peat colonies?" I ask him, when the storm is past and we cross to him again.

"Seven hundred men in Drente alone, not counting the women and children," he replies, and I almost believe I hear the brogue. "The women and children do the stacking and drying," he goes on, "three guilders a week; but it's not a woman's work."

"What! Are you a Socialist?" says the Drente farmer.

"No, not a Socialist. But it's not woman's work," replies the digger stoutly, and scans the moor before stepping off again to his digging.

This, I have said, was some years ago, and our moor (as I may call it) is unrecognisable now. The corn is green upon it, and it grows in the fields around a flourishing town. The frontiers of cultivated land have been carried hundreds of acres south. But follow the diggers there, and you will find them at work very much in the same manner as our sturdy little fen-man at New Buinen. And from there we can return on our tracks all the way to Zuidlaren and Groningen, with an understanding of the wonder we have seen.

At the outpost moor they are removing the peat, and it may be two feet of it, it may be twenty, down to the sandy underground; men digging, the women drying; all according to the latest plans of the fenland government and the Drente regulations. The cutting season is short, from March to June, and the workers and their families, or many of them, live in houses among the peat-stacks, that doubtfully comply, one imagines, with all the clauses of the new Dwellings Act.

Understand: they are lifting a moor. It is lying all round in stacks of peat which when ripe will go back

in boats to the factories at Groningen, or perhaps to brick-kilns as far away as the Vecht.

Enough for the peat. We go back a little way on the road we came, and stop at fields already reclaimed. These a year or two ago were fen. It was drained and treated like the other we have just left. The soil of these fields is the sand that remained when the peat had been cleared, but with a thin layer of the topmost surface worked into it, perhaps a little of the clay from the "terps," but at any rate a large dressing of the artificial manures, the enormous quantities of which in the Dutch Board of Trade returns puzzle any student of them who knows nothing of the latest things in those so-called *dalgronden*.

So we go back; always on the new low level where rested the dug-off moor; and always along the canal system which was the line of advance into this new kind of polderland, from which the peat has to be shipped to the rear. Now we begin to understand the interminable row of buildings which we passed in the morning, and find still stretching out here in the afternoon. When a countryside is levelled thus, so must its townships develop.

The fields stretch deeper the farther we go. The canals are busier. Saw-mills hum on them. There are vessels on the slips. Shops become more numerous among the houses. We are back again in time among busy thoroughfares, but always along the canal. There is Veendam—how grown in these few pages!

Beside the rye-fields has sprung up a cardboard factory. Distilleries and oil factories and potato-meal mills are fed by the barley and potatoes and beetroots in the fields lying round them, where not so very long ago was only sullen Drente moor.

There is the history of the Dutch fen-colonies.

CHAPTER XVIII

PRACTICAL SOCIALISTS

I N Amsterdam last summer I received a letter from a friend at home who is inclined to smile at my enthusiasms, in which he asked me if I had discovered the secret of Holland yet. I understood him to be mocking my account to him of the surprising present-day prosperity of Dutch agriculture, into which no doubt there entered something of the whirling glamour of the polderland in June from which I wrote it. And I answered him (according to his banter) that indeed I had found the secret of Holland's affluence—its pivot and lever and mainspring and prime-mover all in one magic agent, to wit, the cycle or "bike," the *rywiël* or, as in the country itself it is vulgarly called, the *fiets*.

Whence this last name derives is known to none. It comes out of the ages (for ages have rolled with it in thirty years) when the thing itself was still a world's wonder. Did some burgher in the distant Seventies, schooled in the French as folks were then, dub it a *Vite!* Or did another in amaze make lips fly off his teeth with a *Fiets!* to express its whisking motion? These things are hid from the pundits of Leyden, to whom no secret of Javaansch and Norse and Sundanese and all the tongues of Malay and Araby but stands revealed.

Twenty years ago in Holland the *fiets* was still a

novelty. Ten years ago it rode down some formal barriers which previously youths and maidens seeking communion had clandestinely to steal round; and one could predict that old Dutch etiquette itself, a ponderable code, would be spirited away by its revolutions. And that is what has happened. Dutch etiquette now is (so to say) merely the polite rule of the road.

To come to plainer figures, available since they tax the *fiets* in Holland, there were in use in the country a decade ago 95,000 cycles, which was one for each sixty persons. To-day they number more nearly 450,000, or one for every twelve. In the province of Groningen, I am told, the proportion is more nearly one for every eight. Astounding figures; and wonder grows in seeing the wheels they stand for whirl. They have cut down distances in this little country by a quarter; they have indeed eclipsed reckoning itself, for here, where a place is not estimated as "so many miles distant," but as "so many hours, or quarter-hours, *loopen* (walking)," nobody walks! Man, woman, and child "bikes," for profit or for pleasure. The A.N.W.B., the Tourist-bond for Netherland, has 30,000 members in a population of five millions, and is a power in the land. Without a wheel the village labourer would not reach his out-field or garden, the boer could not attend the meeting of his Bond. The trades-school and the winter-courses would wither. Punctured would be the packman's round. All the activities of Holland would go on half-time. When the Georgics of her rural revival is written, it is the *fiets* that it will sing.

Though it was in banter that I cited the cycle to explain the activities of modern Holland, it does very well to introduce a chapter upon them, for not only is it really contributory to them, but they seem to me to be typified in its homely yet effective service. And of

none is this so true as the industry to which I specially applied it.

The flourishing—the *bloeytyd*, as they say in Holland—of Dutch agriculture needs no argument. It is notorious. It has indeed reached the inconceivable pitch of prosperity in which the farmer has ceased from grumbling, and, casting down his eyes, with a shamefaced chuckle admits that he is doing very well.

What he is doing, and how well he is doing it, was the subject of an earlier section of this book. The farmer himself is so local, yet so characteristically Dutch, indeed, that the chapters devoted to him could not describe all his variety. But this we can say of him everywhere: he believed he knew his own business, and he was very jealous about being left alone to do it.

And for long Fortune smiled upon him. Very often he is to be found very “warm,” still, from the glow of her earlier favours. A quarter of a century ago, however, there set in a change. He stuck to his old manner of life and work, preserving his inherited tradition within the confined precincts of his *boerdery*, and the world moved away from him. It left him an anachronism. He lost his market. And as the Old Rhine, lying stagnant, became a public menace and a nuisance, and had to be lifted up and out to the sea again, so antiquated Dutch farming was a danger to the nation, which determined to cut a new passage for it somehow into the stream of the world’s traffic.

That was ten or fifteen years ago, and already the industry is flowing in a full flood, the sight of which, as the reader perceives, excites my naturally staid pen. How has it been done? That can only be learned in the white books and green books and reports and tabulations which are issued from the *Landbouww Huis* in the Hague, for the severe indigestion of the foreign student

who attempts to absorb them. Yet it can be fairly stated in a sentence. The Dutch turned Socialists to do it.

In true Dutch manner "a plan was made," and it is still being elaborated. All over the country agricultural schools have been built and lecture-courses established, with professors and teachers, certificated of course. Skilled advisers in dairying are assigned to each province. A central testing bureau has been equipped, and Government blesses pure butter with its Mark. Scientific advice is dispensed from half a dozen experimental stations. Contagious diseases are baffled in a serum institute. Horse-rearing, cattle-breeding, the improvement of the strains of pigs and goats, rabbits and poultry, and even of bees, are the business of a Department of State. The Government inspects and certifies dead meat and pedigree-stock, and the products of nursery, garden, and orchard.

The State co-opted in this effort the work and the subsidies of the provinces and the communes, as well as of private bodies. The dairying school at Bolsward was originally founded by a private society. The horticultural school at Frederiksoord is the Adriaan van Swieten school on the famous colonies of the Société de Bien-faisance, incorporated in the national scheme. In the same way have come into it the courses in forestry of the ubiquitous Netherland Heath Society. I believe that the experimental garden at Naaldwyk, of which I have spoken, attached to the winter school there, is a contribution from the "Westland" Gardeners' Association. These are a few examples of the co-operation in agricultural education of State and local effort—"local" in a particular manner of speaking, for local effort in the wider sense of communal and provincial aid is the groundwork of all Dutch administration.

It is the same with the State control of the industry. I need only instance the Government Mark for butter, which is practically an official guarantee of efficient private control of butter manufactured by members of the controlling societies; and note that the so-called *zuivelconsulenten* (one of whom, by the way, resides in London) are not State officials, but advisers in dairying appointed by the provincial administrations, and, originally, in the employ of the provincial agricultural societies. Agriculture, in a word, shows innumerable instances of this interlacing of State and local efforts.

But these would have been futile had not the boer responded, and it was far from certain that he would. His fixity was the evil. All the conservatism of his race was concentrated in him. If it was tenacious, he was a limpit. If it was stubborn, he was rock. Yet he moved. There must have existed some happy chance in the revival. The seasons smiled. Older forces may have come to effect, earlier experiments to fruition. Perhaps the miracle was worked only at "the horny point of bare distress." The State was feeding the boer in a hungry place. At any rate, he moved.

The dry bones in the lowlands stirred. There was a rumour of success in the countrysides. The port of Harlingen was crowded with the produce of Friesland. Germany—protectionist Germany—took the North Holland fruits, and called for more. Auction-rooms appeared on the Westland canals. Tram-loads of garden-stuffs ran down the roads to the Hook. New barns rose in the bulb-land. The fen-colonies stretched and stretched. North and south, factories sprang up beside the fields, working up their potatoes and straw and sugar-beet.

The horizon widened round the *boerdery*—not much, perhaps, and not of course everywhere. But new wagons appeared in many a barn. Beside the antiquated harrows

with wooden teeth rested others of American make. In country carts clanking along muddy November roads from the station, one noticed there were bags of phosphates. And changes crept into the life of the farms, too. The butter-churns were silent, for the milk now went to the factory. The farmer was less often at the market, and when he did go he sought speech of the travelling teacher or the *consulent*, and instead of on the notary he called at his loan-bank; and he no longer bought medicine for his cow of the blacksmith. At night his boy, sometimes his girl too, set off to the agricultural school. He himself mounted his *fiet*s and rode to the inn if his Bond was holding a meeting in the big room upstairs.

The Dutch farmer is not to be represented, indeed, as a sudden convert to science. He leaves that to the younger generation, and I confess that I do not find it exactly swarming up the splendid superstructure of instruction which is crowned by the College on the heights of Wageningen. But he has seized the meaning of co-operation. The boer, prickly with individuality and hoary with tradition, whose ideal it was, and may be still, to live in his polder with nothing to break his horizon, and no one about him save his wife and children, now sells his milk and his produce, buys his seeds and manures and foodstuffs, insures his cattle, hires his reaper, and borrows his money, all in association, and does it because it pays.

And the cost of the experiment? Its cost must be enormous. It seems to me, however, to have been fortunate in winning the favour of the nation which pays the price. From the first it has engaged the interest of practical men. The whole country has leagued itself in this conspiracy of an economic Socialism. It believes it sees its money coming back. And certainly in the

haymaking days of last May and June the land was flauntingly prosperous, and Holland looked the Summer of the World. Agriculture is having its *bloeiityd*, and "when all is well with the boer," the Dutch say, "all is well."

Now, these principles of State intervention and co-operative effort, underlying the revival of its agriculture, are visible in most of the activities of Holland to-day. And it is one of the anomalies which we promised ourselves to find, that these principles are opposed to the salient characteristics of the Dutch.

A political Socialism is not making great headway among them. It makes a show of strength, true, in the industrial towns, but with the prosperity of the farmers it declines in the country. The Liberal party has split on the rock of Individualism, and at the moment is a wreck. I judge the signs wrongly, too, if Capitalism is not gathering itself together for a display of its political power. Meanwhile, the combined Conservative forces in the country are in the ascendant in the Chambers.

Co-operation, again, is difficult for Dutchmen. They do not work well, or at any rate do not often work long, in association. There is constant schism among them: that, indeed, is their whole history. They are a nation of seceders. The less lovely traits of their character, we discovered, reflect a manly but too resolute individualism. And thus co-operation, as it is known in other countries, has never succeeded in Holland. Trade Unionism wilts. No object, in fact, upon which men desire to combine but occasions competitive Bonds. Do the peasants in Brabant start a rabbit-show? Then, somewhere about Alkmaar, perhaps, there appears a "Christian Society for the Improvement of Tame Rabbits."

Nevertheless, co-operation seems to me to be the conspicuous principle in Holland to-day, and I have

ventured to call the Dutch practical Socialists. As one moves through the country, listening to discussions about recent legislation, he observes the signs of a gathering revolt. Yet in the main it is only the revolt of the worried tax-payer. There are strong reactionary elements, and much of the so-called Radicalism is still Whiggish; but one cannot miss seeing that across the prolonged strife on the education question, which exhibited the two tendencies of *laissez-faire* Dutch Liberalism and a Dutch reaction towards a three-hundred-years old Calvinism, there cut a powerful and spreading humanitarian movement coloured with every shade of modern philanthropic, altruistic, and socialistic sentiment.

Of all this we shall find corroboration in recent legislation to come under our notice later, but I shall illustrate it here by one of the most conspicuous and happy examples. I refer to the Children's Act, and the part played in its administration by various societies and institutions, of which "Pro Juventute" is the best known.

There is no First Offender's Act in Holland, nor is there any liberation of prisoners on parole; and in the opinion of many among themselves our neighbours had fallen behind in the provision of Reformatory institutions, famous as several of these in Holland were. By this Children's Act, however, they stepped into the forefront. It gives to magistrates, not an unlimited, but a quite considerable discretion in dealing with children (minors: that is, under 18) brought before them and convicted of crime, theft as a rule. In these cases, which are tried in private, and after a preliminary investigation, the prisoners are given competent legal aid. On conviction they may be (and most generally are on a first offence) dismissed with a reprimand; or are punished in this way and that; or they may be committed to the charge of one or other of many institutions indicated by the Act as

open to the magistrate for choice. If any of the private societies recognised by the law has intervened already for the education of the child, the prosecution may be postponed or dropped. In this way there enters, as has been said, the association of private societies with the administration of the Act.

It is, however, in itself an interesting and far-reaching piece of legislation, to be described at greater length; especially as it indicates still another general characteristic of the Dutch—I mean their greater genius for ordering and elaboration than for initiative.

There are provided under the Act disciplinary schools (*tuchtscholen*), of which there are at present five (one for girls), and to these minors may be ordered for a comparatively short period, for the manipulation, so to say, of their natures. The young criminal may be committed to them. Or at the request of respectable parents or guardians a child who has got out of hand will be received there, to be sent back at the end of a year, say, cured presumably and in his right mind, to the family surroundings to whose virtues he had not previously done justice. In such cases the State bears the cost of the experiment, if the parents or guardians are unable to pay. Moreover, should they rue having packed off the offender, they may petition for his return, and it is at the discretion of the authorities to grant it: the boy's conduct in the school decides.

But in addition to these and the criminal cases are others of minors living amid pernicious home influences. Under the Children's Act the State regulates and limits the parents' power over the child. It can undertake his (or her) upbringing (*opvoeding*) to the age of twenty-one; it can adopt the neglected or criminal child, in fact, or at any rate appropriate him for certain guardians, among whom are private institutions (subsidised in some in-

stances) to which he is then entrusted. And further, the Act has created three State institutions (*Ryks opvoeding gestichten*), one of them for girls, to which the minor can be committed.

These, without going into details (of safeguards and of guardianship, for example), are the main provisions of a piece of legislation which would be more than thorough anywhere, but is especially so in Holland, among certain strata of whose society complete parental authority is still exercised with a sense of Scriptural sanction.

Of the last-named (the "upbringing") schools I can speak from hearsay only. In that at Alkmaar are treated the most depraved youth. That at Kruisberg is used as a probationary institution, in which cases are kept under observation, before it is decided how they shall be treated. Avereest sets the model, which no doubt will be followed at Amersfoort also, where a new building is being erected. The lads are trained in agriculture or to a trade, and statistics indicate that over 80 per cent. of the workmen and 95 per cent. of the farm-hands who have left the institutions have been placed in good situations. Besides instruction, the strengthening of character is aimed at, and with this in view the youths are divided into groups of fifteen, each of which elects its own officers, and possesses a garden in which their tastes in the rearing of plants and animals are encouraged.

Recently I visited the newest of the disciplinary institutions (*tuchtscholen*), at Velsen. It stands on the outskirts of the village, and looks a trade-school or philanthropic institution of the customary Dutch type. You would never mistake it for a prison from its outward appearance. I was admitted by a woman. One soon observed signs that the boys are kept under constant observation, which indeed is essential to the system; but this supervision was without any traces of

prison discipline. I saw no uniformed officials in the building.

On the day of my visit there were fifty boys and lads in the school, which has accommodation for sixty-four. There are four divisions. In the first are the newcomers, who are kept isolated for a week or two (never more than a month), but scarcely in solitary confinement, for now is the occasion taken by the Director and other officials to be much with them, softening their mood and seeking acquaintance with their natures. They are also given gymnastics with the others in the garden. In the normal section, to which the boy passes next, all work and study together, but speech is forbidden and discipline is strict. From there his good conduct may carry him to the class for the well behaved, in which there is freedom of games and speech, and liberty to write letters, receive visitors, and even on occasion to walk outside the bounds of the institution. But there is no over-indulgence. An apple, it may be, is the simple reward of virtue, or on special occasions a cigar! The fourth division is for the unruly; and of course it is at the discretion of the authorities to pass on any undisciplined boy, when his year at the *tucht school* is up, to one of the educational establishments, where he may be retained until he is twenty-one.

I found boys at Velsen who had received a superior education: one had been at a higher-burgher school, another at a trades-school: but most were ill-instructed and from poor homes. A boy of sixteen, still isolated, was the son of a follower of the kermesses, and had never got beyond the third class in his elementary school. Another had been sent here from the navy, after conviction for some petty crime (I think theft); I was told that if his conduct was satisfactory he would probably be received back into the service. The trawlers at

Ymuiden provide for many of the reformed the opportunity for a fresh start.

Some of the lads were working in the gardens. Others were in the classrooms, which, like the instruction given in them, seemed to be similar to those I had seen so often in the public schools. The short period of confinement made instruction in a trade impossible. I had the misfortune to pay my visit in the absence of the Director, and so possibly missed hearing much of interest about the result accomplished in these schools. On that point the opinion formed on a casual visit could be of no value, and the experiment may be still too new for results to declare themselves.

The two strong impressions left on myself were the excellent physique of most of the boys, and the superior intelligence in the look of some of the lads in the unruly section. From the last fact I have no wish to generalise. The first corroborates my observation, borne out also by conscript statistics, that the physical condition of the Dutch youth has markedly improved in the last decade.

The distinguished jurist, whose courtesy made this visit to a *tucht school* possible for me, expressed the opinion that no recent legislation in Holland had been more efficacious than the Children's Law, and in lay circles also I found it generally approved; though not infrequently with a grumble that to the burdens of the ratepayer there comes no end. The humane appeal is irresistible,—but where is the money to come from?

That, of course, is the rub!

CHAPTER XIX

THE BURGOMASTER

THE independent spirit of her towns is the most vital fact in Holland's history. However much the country counted for in the war with Philip, it was they who threw off the power of Spain. And it was they also who reaped the reward: who are the patricians to-day but the descendants of the men who were faithful to Orange? Within city walls, and not on the land, are the enlarged and imaginative conditions of living, and within them was fostered the liberalism of men's minds in the Netherlands. This liberalism was the true reforming spirit. It nurtured education, and its tradition survives in the pride of place allowed to education in modern Holland. The persistent, eager independence of the towns is still one of the most powerful factors in her life.

To have a true conception of her citizen society, we must think of it as being scarcely less jealous of its individuality than the boer is of his. And not only in the towns are we to look for this tenacious grip on particularity. It is amusingly paralleled in every handful of houses that boasts a burgomaster.

It is the villages even more than the cities which create the impression of a humming, ordered life that we carry away from the Lowlands especially. The villages, indeed, bring town into every corner of the country. In

a manner, all that the boer rings off from his patriarchal domain is urban: some faint wash of the tradition of civic pomp and independence has reached even to his drawbridge. He has somewhat desperately to preserve his self-centred ideal against another, as tenacious, of exclusive citizenship. This, no doubt, is to exaggerate the particularity of both, which time has sapped, and may destroy; but it enforces a characteristic aspect of Holland. The spirit of self-government, which is "towny," seems to rest over the whole country. And in the present chapter I wish to get behind this impression, and to watch from one or two points the working of the local machine which produces it.

The machine is the same in city, town, and village. The unit of self-government is the commune, the *gemeente*. It is a territory of varying extent, in which urban and rural districts and populations are mixed indiscriminately. Sometimes it is a town or a city, limited by the walls; or its borders may spread wider. It may, on the other hand, be a portion only of a town, as in Delft, where three communes meet, each of them retaining its own administration, and acting independently. Most often it is a village or group of villages with more or less land around it. In any case it is of historic growth, in form irregular and often inconvenient, determined with little or no consideration for the needs of the inhabitants.

Holland is composed of 1121 of these communes, each with a council of from seven to forty-five members, according to the population they represent, and elected by the enfranchised inhabitants from among themselves. The electoral qualification is that, to be noted later, for a member of the Second Chamber, with the addition of the payment of a sum in the rates which varies with the importance of the commune. So far, therefore, the council (*gemeente raad*) has a greater power than the

States-General over the purse of the citizens, and the local, communal franchise is restricted in consequence. There are in Leeuwarden, to take the first example at hand, 4770 voters for the Second Chamber, and only 4236 for the local council; that is to say, some five hundred men in that city have no voice in the government of their own municipality, though they do have a vote in the country's affairs. If there is any other explanation of this than the tenacity of local rights which has been so powerful an element in Holland's history, I do not know it.

From among their number the councillors choose the wethouders, or aldermen, two, three, or four according to the population they represent, and these with the burgomaster compose the daily executive (the *dagelyksch bestuur*) for transacting the day-to-day business of the *gemeente*. That is the Dutch method, common to public and private bodies alike.

The burgomaster is not popularly elected, but is appointed by the sovereign. He carries on in his office the representation of the sovereign power in the communes; yet although he is responsible to the commune for his administration and is paid by it (which in the case of every other person is a disqualification), he is eligible as a member of the communal council. His position, in fact, is altogether peculiar. As the sovereign's representative, he is president of the council. By reason of his office he has an advising voice in its deliberations. If the electors choose him as a member, he of course has a vote. He is, moreover, the head of the executive body, which also prepares the resolutions to be taken by the Council; where any councillor, however, may initiate business; and his hands are strengthened further by the power of staying the execution of any of the Council's decrees for thirty days while he appeals to



AFTER THE STORM

FROM THE PAINTING BY JOSEF ISRAELS

the sovereign. The burgomaster's prerogative is clearly by no means so hollow as Mr. Bumble's.

There is, in fact, a profession of burgomaster; but the plums in it are not very large. I question if the office carries with it over £600 anywhere except in Amsterdam. In Leeuwarden (to continue drawing our examples from that town and the Province of Friesland) the salary is £365, and it decreases in the communes of the Province until we come to about £66 in Hindeloopen. The wethouders are paid small salaries, running from £75 in Leeuwarden to £2, 10s. in Schiermonnikoog; and the councillors are solaced for their labour by a trifle of "presence-money." The salary of the secretary of the *gemeente* is rather smaller than the burgomaster's, and the collector's, again, smaller still than the secretary's. Leeuwarden pays about £1100 for the services of the officials and councillors whom we have mentioned; and together they cost the forty-three *gemeenten* in the Province rather less than £18,000.

These figures, or at any rate some of them, confirm a point I have made earlier as to the meagre incomes which satisfy many highly instructed men in Holland. The growth of the bureaucracy is a subject for laughter (on the wrong side of the mouth) among the Dutchmen who still remain outside it; but if the officials are many, the guilders they draw for their services are relatively few.

This representation of the sovereign power on boards of local government, illustrated by the position of the burgomaster, is common to the whole Dutch system of administration, and is of much historic interest. That cannot be followed here; but it is worth while to point out that the case of the Dutch is in this precisely the antithesis of our own. For we in Great Britain have aimed at the reality of a political democracy, however

our instincts of loyalty and privilege may constitute English Society what Mr. W. D. Howells calls "a realm of faerie." The Dutch, on the other hand, withal their often too aggressive assertion of the right to respect none but themselves, are acquiescent under a larger exercise of the sovereign prerogative than we should tolerate anywhere in these islands. And since this proceeds from no love of the Dutch for authority, I conclude that they feel the need of an "honest broker" among their many local prescriptions.

Until within half a century ago, the *gemeente raad* in the towns, I am told, was composed almost entirely of doctors of law, an ideal constitution, which nevertheless to our English notions is about the very worst imaginable. It corroborates the impression, hinted at often already, that a highly educated professional class for long exercised an unusually strong influence on Dutch affairs which is now considerably weakened. The explanation is, partly, that in this class there was great public spirit, while in the mass of the people there was just as little as the failure to encourage it would lead us to expect. But another reason undoubtedly was the incorrigible belief, or profession of belief, among this special class that wisdom walks with instruction. A further illustration of this will appear presently; for a moment longer, however, we will keep our eye upon our burgomaster.

He is, as a rule, still a man of family or some fortune, drawn therefore from the society that chiefly, since as far back as Sir William Temple's day at least, has filled the civil offices of State; and being trained for his duties, which often are performed in communes composed entirely of peasants, he plays a necessary and useful rôle in the life of the country. I have more than once had occasion to observe him as a man of light and leading, if not in dark, at least in dim, communities.

When, on the other hand, he is stupid and tactless, as even far more learned men than he can be, there is personal friction. I have heard the creation of socialists charged to his folly. Now that the councils have opened to working men, or they have forced their way within them, his official position gives occasion, as in Amsterdam and some other large towns, for trials of strength in popular self-government.

The burgomaster's is often a thankless task. In the country, composing private feuds brings him amusing experiences such as do not alleviate his lot among public bickerings in the towns. On the other hand, upon the heads of rural communes descends the unquenchable curiosity of the Department of Agriculture. Square yards of parchment, or at least the finest paper, drop upon his table with requests to be filled in. What (for example) was the state of the weather when the winter wheat was sown? To which, and all such-like, one of them blandly replies, "A little cloudy." That complicates no report. "Over-regulated Holland" is the lament of many a country burgomaster. And one of them in the city has declared that he was little better than a kind of printer's devil for the public.

Among his duties and the aldermen's do not lie those associated with the magistrates in our police courts. The burgomaster sometimes, indeed, appears to act as public prosecutor, inasmuch as it rests with him to draw up the *procès-verbal* by which the administration of justice is initiated in every case. But that is only where the burgomaster combines in his office that of Head of the Police.

The lowest courts in Holland are presided over by the Canton judges. Superior to them are those in which the Arrondissement courts, created under French rule, are still represented; and above the Arrondissement

courts again are Provincial courts, mainly of appeal; the crown of the judicial system being the High Court, or *Hooge Raad*, at the Hague, with which appeals for *cassation* are lodged. The feature of the system which interests us here is that even in its lowest levels in the communes justice is not administered by anyone who does not possess the diploma of Doctor of Law.

Here is the further illustration promised of the faith of the Dutch in the expert; and they carry it so far, as all the world knows, as to refuse to adopt the system of trial by a jury of ordinary laymen and true. In how many ways the country benefits from this determined exclusion of the amateur is evident frequently to the envious stranger; but he may be permitted to doubt, though the Dutch are so certain of it, that the administration of justice is one of them. The breakdown of the layman under an appeal to sentiment is not a greater danger, one imagines, than the rigidity of the expert against the appeal to common sense,—and, of course, it lies with the Englishman to claim that the underlying elastic basis of common sense in his laws is precisely the element which contributes most to his personal freedom.

Holland has been stirred of late by a certain notorious Papendrecht Case, involving in a manner the purity of justice from a prejudicing instinct of authority to protect its agents. That is not a point on which a foreigner is likely to have sufficient knowledge even to formulate an opinion for himself; but upon the subsequent development of the case it is open for him to make the comment, that it did not display any eminent wisdom of the specialist, and indeed could scarcely have scandalised a country with a system of jury trial.

The routine of business of the Councils day by day exhibits no peculiar principle for the sake of which we

need follow it, unless it be that in some cases decisions are left to the arbitrament of the lot. The appointment of teachers and the supervision of education within the *gemeente*, and such work in Poor Relief as the Churches leave undone, fall among their duties; and they have others, indicated in different chapters of this book, arising out of the peculiar and characteristic conditions of the country. I wish now to glance at some recent legislation on Public Health and Morals which in certain of its aspects at least is peculiar, and illustrates another side of the burgomaster's work.

If in Dutch cities is wanting the display of foolish finery, so certainly are *not* the taverns (and I might add the lawyers), which also were banished from Utopia. The number of the first, however, has been considerably lessened by the Drink Bill of 1904, which sums up the legislation of a quarter of a century for combating the Drink evil. The licences now issued in a commune, including those for clubs, are limited by the population thus: in a town of over 50,000 they may not exceed one in 500; in towns of from 20,000 to 50,000, one in 400; from 10,000 to 20,000, one in 300; and under 10,000, one in 250.

It need hardly be said that when this regulation was made, the number of licences in almost all the communes exceeded the limit it laid down; and reductions have followed, after various methods, among them the withdrawal of a licence that was not used. Reduction, as a matter of fact, occurs automatically, for the licence in Holland goes with a person, not with a building, and lapses at such person's death. Further, all licences issued since 1904 are subject to withdrawal. At the end of each five years the Council may petition the Crown for the reduction of the maximum number, as it may for a modification of the reduction; and it has

power, moreover, to determine that in certain streets there shall be no licensed house.

The payment of workmen's wages on licensed premises is forbidden. It is a criminal offence to sell or serve drink, or even supply it free, at auctions or rousps. The Act nowhere defines what intoxicating liquor is, but it distinguishes beer and wine from spirits, which may no longer be sold in railway waiting-rooms. The cost of a licence is calculated according to rental, locality, hours, and the extent of the trade done in the house, and all licensed premises are subject to inspection. No person under sixteen years may enter upon them unaccompanied.

The Council's powers, therefore, in respect of the drink traffic are great; and they extend also to the regulation of the hours for opening and closing licensed premises, which they may even order to remain shut on particular occasions during licensed hours; and to the regulation of the employment of women in them.

The public health of Holland, again, has been the object of legislation in the *Gezondheidswet* of 1901, an Act of an elaborate nature, both for inquiry and advice and for administration. A Central Board, established at Utrecht, comprises seven members, and half a hundred extraordinary members, whose business it is to report to the Minister of Home Affairs on the state of the public health, and to offer suggestions for its improvement. In each commune of over 18,000 inhabitants, or combination of communes (as determined) up to 40,000, a commission of not fewer than five members is appointed by the Commissary of the Queen, which has the duty of making reports to the Central Board. There are some 130 of these Commissions in the country, and the whole system is linked up in four

head-inspectors, each with a district, to which are attached four inspectors, two architects or engineers, a pharmacist and a physician, whose duty, generally and severally, is the supervision of housing, of the preparation of medicines, the purity of food, contagious diseases, and the hygiene of soil, water, and air.

Bound up with this general legislation for the public health is that particularly for the improvement of dwellings, comprised in the *Woningwet* of 1901. It is of far-reaching consequences: one sees signs of its working (not always beautiful, as too often is the case with useful legislation) in new buildings all over the country.

The landlord of every inhabited dwelling must report the number of rooms in it, and the number of their occupants, and notify especially whether it contains three or fewer rooms fit for habitation. This report is made to the Council of the commune in which the property is situated, and is passed on in time to the Commission of Health referred to earlier. It lies next with the Commission to report back to the Council such improvements as seem to it to be necessary to render inhabitable rooms habitable, and to relieve evident overcrowding. Moreover, any three inhabitants of the commune who are of age may make a representation in regard to any property in it to the Council, which thereupon must act as if the landlord himself had reported.

When it is decided that a building is not habitable, notice to quit it within six months (or in special cases a year) is issued, and its condemnation is marked upon the building itself. To the Council falls the ticklish question of compensation. Further, the Council may prohibit rebuilding on the site of the condemned house, should its absorption be desirable in view of town's

improvement, in accordance with the "extension plan" (revisable every ten years) with which each town of over 10,000 inhabitants has to provide itself. The Council, indeed, has still greater powers. It may give assistance to persons obliged to quit under its notice; it has it at its option to buy up property; and it may build, claiming an advance from the Treasury in doing so. And under the Act, all societies recognised by Royal Decree as existing exclusively for the amelioration of the people in regard to housing, may receive a subsidy for their work from the State, and from the commune, on condition that the advance is refunded, or that the property erected reverts to the commune, within fifty years.

From these examples of the work going on in the eleven hundred and more *gemeenten* in Holland, the reader can vivify his impression of its busy and well-ordered life. The Dutchman, he will admit, though difficult to move, achieves a considerable pace when he is set agoing.

It will have been gathered from a score of indications that the drain upon the communal purse is severe. The revenues are derived from property and rating. Some of the lands are very valuable, but they lie chiefly in rural communes. The rating powers will be exhibited immediately; I ought to note, however, that the Councils cannot levy for libraries or museums, or, indeed, for any special services except the opening up of roads and streets. The debt of the communes at this moment is considerably over thirty millions, and their relief, by a delimitation of boundaries and extension of State taxation, is at present under the consideration of the Chambers.

There is no more urgent public question in Holland than Taxation, and none with a more direct interest for Dutch homes. The last are not infrequently chosen in

view of it. A word *forenzen* (probably from "foreigners") has been coined to denote those who, to escape its high rates, live away from the city in which lies the source of their incomes. In Amsterdam the number of these is so high that posts in the city's service carry with them the obligation to reside within it. The variation in the communal taxes and their heavy burden in Amsterdam is specially emphasised in the typical cases with which I am to attempt to illustrate the whole system.

Taxes fall under these heads :—

- A. Capital or Wealth (*vermogens belasting*).
- B. Occupation or Profession (*bedryfs belasting*).
- C. Personal (*personeele belasting*).
- D. Land (*grond belasting*).
- F. Dog (*honden*).

Of these, A and B together make up the national income tax, and, with C and D, are State taxes. E (known as *hoofdelyken omslag* or poll tax) and F are communal taxes. Provincial taxes take the form of surcharges on A and C.

In order to illustrate the incidence of these taxes, I have had worked out for me by obliging hands the tax-papers of two imaginary citizens of the same profession and almost identical fortune and income. They are both notaries, making £500 a year in their profession and enjoying the revenues of an invested capital of £10,000. The first lives in Amsterdam; the second in —, a small provincial town with average taxable conditions. Both keep two female servants, and the second, in addition, has a coachman and a gardener.

I find it impossible to find room for the elaborate working out of these taxes, which lies before me now, but from the following general results the scheme

and burden of taxation in Holland discover themselves :—

STATE TAXES¹

	In —.	In Amsterdam.
A. Capital tax . .	Fl. 156'44	Fl. 165
B. Occupation tax . .	139'60	121
C. Poll tax . .	234'78	399'12
D. Land tax . .	25'36	50
COMMUNAL TAXES		
E. Income tax . .	Fl. 409'20	Fl. 523'12
F. Dox tax . .	3	3

¹ Subject to certain surcharges for the province and commune.

It appears, therefore, that the taxpayer in the provincial town, with an income from all sources of £863, 6s. 8d. and living in a house assessed at £25, pays £80, 14s. 5d., or 9 per cent. in rates and taxes (about £38 in rates and £42 in taxes). The second taxpayer, with an income of £850, but living in Amsterdam in a house with an assessed value of £60 (which he owns), pays £105, 2s. 6d. in rates and taxes (about £63 in rates and £39 in taxes), or nearly 11½ per cent.

CHAPTER XX

THE WORKMAN

THE Dutch workman has a long day. His hours of labour are fixed by law at a maximum of eleven out of the twenty-four, and work may not begin before five or continue after seven. But there are modifications of this, different communes having (within limits) different regulations. The trades put upon an exceptional basis, agriculture being one, have by a recent revision of legislation been reduced in number from fourteen to seven. In the scheduled occupations, employment on Sunday is prohibited. One of the exciting questions before the Chambers at present is a Baker's Law, which has been introduced to make work in bakeries overnight or on Sundays illegal.

The hours vary in the cotton mills of Twente. In one small town I found they ran from 7 to 12 and from 1.30 to 7, with twenty minutes for breakfast and half an hour for tea. On Saturday work ceased at midday. A week of 58 hours is probably most usual at Enschede, where, however, there is in some factories a week of 63 hours still, work on Saturday not finishing in them until 4.

In the small town of Goor referred to, the pay-sheets in the net factory showed a variation of from 10s. 10d. to 21s. 8d. The last, made on the newest machinery, was exceptional. There were many entries at the lower

figures, from 10s. 10d. to 13s. 4d.; the average wage is probably about 20s. The skilled weavers in the district make from 22s. to 24s.; the spinners sometimes as much as 35s. The wages of the children employed run from 4s. 2d. to 6s. 8d. One of the employers told me he found that they are paying Lancashire rates for labour. He meant, I take it, for skilled labour (which is scarce), and on the basis of the longer hours.

In the small town the workman can get a house for 1s. per week; and 3s., or from £7 to £8 a year, is the rent of the best workmen's dwellings. In Enschede, again, houses cost a little more, not much. Living is not costly in Twente, but, as everywhere else, it goes up. So, gradually, do wages, owing partly to interesting local conditions. There is a scarcity of skilled labour. The new line from Delden to Lochem has been carried through (among other reasons) with a view of tapping an isolated district for young workers. Goor already finds the supply increased slightly, and hopes for more; which means that with opportunity the peasantry are tempted off the land. But agriculture does not grow skilled cotton-workers in a season.

Meanwhile there are still found in Goor the conditions of an industrial town which has not grown beyond a village, or quite beyond the relations between a working-class and masters who have been their neighbours since boyhood. There has never, I believe, been a strike there. Different conditions are at once visible to the observer in Enschede, where villas (of a somewhat vivid type and variety, it happens) are springing up amid the necessarily greater drabness of a larger population. Yet Goor declares itself Socialist, no less than Enschede; and Enschede tempts away the Goor workers by the offer of greater amusements at night, which, one imagines, they have not much time to enjoy. And

Enschede, after all, is a small place, and its amusements are not very visible to our eyes.

Here is reflected one aspect of the industrial situation in Holland. The workers are not crowded into great cities. They cannot, or seldom, escape the pressure of self-respect. The self-respect of the small community, again, cannot permit the glaring misery of want in its midst. Drab the industrial towns may be, but our squalor is not found in them. That does not settle the economic problem, any more than that of the land is settled because the Twente field-worker does not starve, and is often happy, on 90 cents for a day of twelve hours. It only explains certain Dutch appearances.

Even in the cities poverty is not clamorous, as with us. The homeless of the Embankment is an impossible sight in Holland. I give the fact no significance beyond its bearing upon utter destitution. In Rotterdam—where only, one might almost say, the conditions of a great city hold: Amsterdam is so individual—there are few who cannot pay the penny that provides a bed, and these few get it at a police station.

In Rotterdam the average wage of workmen (the dockers included) is again about 20s., and those earning that sum are generally found living in houses with a weekly rent of 4s. 2d. The unique conditions of the city explain the unusually large number of the dockers, whose earnings therefore are of importance.

For those paid by the hour, the day is from 7 to 7, at 25 cents per hour, two hours off; and 50 per cent. more for overtime. The 10-hour day's wage is thus 4s. 2d.; but it is only 3s. 9d. if these casual (*losse*) dockers are engaged for the whole day, and 2s. 1d. if for half a day.

There are also regular (*vaste*) dockers, employed on two different bases of payment. One class, for light general

cargo, make an average fixed wage of 20s. for a week of six days; with 5d. per hour extra for night work. The other class do the discharging of ores, coal, grain, and other heavy cargoes, and are paid according to the merchandise they handle. Working in gangs of eight men, they receive, for example, 20 cents per ton of grain, or $2\frac{1}{2}$ cents each. Such a docker, who frequently works 36 hours at a stretch, can earn from 40s. to 67s. a week.

It was in making inquiries about the earnings of the Rotterdam and Amsterdam dockers that I got a glimpse of the hard lot of Dutch working women. In both cities I was told exactly the same story of the docker's high wage: only a few guilders—seven was the number always mentioned—is handed for housekeeping to the wife, who ekes them out by charring. From 6.30 in the morning to 7 at night she works for a guilder and meals. From 6.30 to 4 counts as half a day, and for this she is given a shilling and her luncheon.

The conditions of the workmen of Rotterdam may be taken as being reproduced generally in Amsterdam, where, however, under Socialist influence, the Council is understood to aim at 26s. 8d. as a minimum wage for its employees. In the Jordaan, the workman's quarters, house rents run from £5 to £12 or £15, and many clerks also find houses at cheap rents there.

Amsterdam's special class are the diamond workers, of whom almost all are Jews, and almost all are in employment. They earn at present between £4, 10s. and £4, 14s. per week. These figures apply to a body of nearly 7000 workmen, and their Bond, in its strength and perfect organisation, is in contrast to the divided unions in most Dutch trades.

Enough of statistics, which I have confined to some results of my own inquiries; they corroborate anyone's observations. I do not find it easy to establish compari-

sons between Dutch working-class conditions and our own. Certain special workmen in Holland are making very high wages: the country is at the moment enjoying a season of prosperity. Follow the crowds going to work in the cold and dreary winter mornings—over the bridge to Feyenoord in Rotterdam, as a notable example, but also anywhere in the country—their coffee-tins and napkins with food over their shoulders, every man's hands in his pockets, and you will discover their hard conditions and long hours of labour. Rye bread (with more white), potatoes, beans, bacon, without meat, but with gymnastics in the school, observation and statistics show, are nourishing an increasingly stalwart race. Often a steaming dish, with forks working briskly in it, and the cleanliness and a comfortableness in their houses, hide a penurious life; but the numbers of women and children of the families—always very large families—who are also at work tell a tale of the narrow margin on which these households have to manage. Yet I should say that, comparatively with the middle classes, the Dutch working classes are at least as well off as our own. In Holland the middle-class, judged by incomes, is much larger, and its burdens are much heavier, than with us.

The Dutch workman is secured by Factory Acts in the inspection of factories and workshops for health and safety. One of the most important pieces of recent legislation is the Workman's Compensation Act, based on German and Austrian models, for the obligatory insurance of workmen against sickness and accident incurred by them in certain occupations. Its introduction into the Chambers aroused strong opposition from the industrial section of the Liberals, and was one of the causes of the weakening of the Liberal Union, which helped to the overthrow of the Liberal party.

For its execution there has been created a system of

State Insurance, administered by means of a State Insurance Bank, with a directorate appointed by the Crown, and accountable to the Minister of Industry and Commerce. There is also a Board of Supervision, with a third of the members employers, and a third employees. Compensation is fixed and awarded by the Bank, which entertains appeals from any of the interested parties. Payments are made at the Post Office.

The premium is fixed according to the amount of salary and the nature of the industry. If the employer is a Nederlander he is at liberty to take his own risk, provided he can give the Bank the necessary security, and compensates it for outlays, and pays a small sum towards the cost of administration. Should the Bank award a permanent pension, it demands from the employer the *contante waarde*, that is, sums actually paid out by it, with interest, and also the capital sum sufficient to ensure the payment of the pension for life.

If the employer has insured the risk with some organisation other than the Bank, he must compensate the Bank for any oncosts, and when a pension has been awarded, the organisation must pay the *contante waarde*, and lodge the capital sum with the Bank.

In the case of accident, the employee receives free medical attendance, but no further compensation if he recovers and is back at work within three days. For the first six months of disablement he is paid 70 per cent. of his daily wages, and beyond that period he is pensioned according to whether the disablement is temporary or permanent. The pension, which is always revisable, is fixed at 70 per cent. of his earnings as a maximum, and calculated in proportion as he has lost the means of livelihood. In the case of death, a sum equal to his wage for thirty days is advanced for funeral expenses, and a pension, which must not exceed 60 per

cent. of his wages, is paid to his relatives, who include wife, children up to their seventeenth year, parents, grandparents, orphan grandchildren, and parents-in-law. Compensation is reduced by half when the accident happens to a man the worse of drink; and in such a case no pension is due to his relatives if he dies.

"How do Dutch workmen amuse themselves?" I once asked in Holland, and was answered, "With lotteries." They certainly provide a diversion in a life that has few. A ticket in the State lottery costs fl. 60, and is divided into 20th shares. It is not unusual for a score of workmen in a shop to subscribe the price of one, taking a share in twenty tickets, thus increasing their chances. There are now three State lotteries in the year, drawn in five or six classes, with a week's interval between each, the drawing of the last series occupying several consecutive days. When the tickets are issued there is a rush to buy them, for there are not enough to meet the demand. There is a lottery office on the Dam, for the opening of which you can see a long queue formed into a lane behind the Kalverstraat, patiently waiting through the night. The lotteries are drawn at the Hague, under Government supervision, by the children of the Orphanage there.

The country receives 15 per cent. of the subscription, and so considerable is the revenue that a "Clerical" Government, pledged to do away with lotteries, apparently cannot venture on a clean sweep. I doubt if it would be very popular. Public opinion is divided about their being an evil. It is not only the workmen who support them. A lady of my acquaintance amused me by declaring that she always had a flutter, and thought it very good fun. "Better to bet on lotteries than on other things," is the remark of many who never themselves bet at all. While I have been writing, however,

a law has been passed against the making of books on the steeplechases and flat-racing. When earlier, a betting list on football matches was published, the football league stepped in and got it suppressed.

Drink is the Dutch workman's curse. He begins the day with a *borrel*, and has had many more before it is finished. The lower-class public-houses seem to one to be always full, and to a late hour, and I have mentioned already how much of many docker's wages is spent in them. If a stranger can depend on his observations, there is more continuous and heavy drinking in the country, particularly in the larger villages and smaller towns in the districts feeling the effects of the agricultural revival, than in the cities. It is in the last that most converts are found for the Temperance doctrine, of which, I am told, the Socialists are specially ardent preachers.

Rotterdam is not exactly a model of virtue, but it assumes the air of one as easily as the shipping ports I know at home, and in its scenes of rowdy debauchery—the Short High Street can be hideous—the British seaman is reported locally to be a conspicuous performer. Our tongue, I dare say, shields many a foreign reputation. I am reminded of a shindy among Dutch lightermen on the quay of the little town of Middelburg: my English artist companion then will bear me out that only the abuse was intelligible to him: it was plain and familiar Anglo-Saxon; but like a famous lover of a row, "though I know the angry words that passed on the occasion, I have no intention of telling them."

In Amsterdam, again, the eyesore of the Nes has almost been removed, and the centre of the city's gaiety has shifted to the Rembrandts Plein. But even there the appearance of café life is deceptive. But for the Jews of the diamond industry, and strangers, it would probably look rather empty. The café is the club of

many a Dutchman, who never sees a newspaper anywhere else. No one buys a paper on the streets in Holland, or has it offered him for sale. A man is a reader of the *Nieuws van den Dag*, say, or the *Standaard* or the *Telegraaf*, subscribes to it for three months or a year, and has it delivered from the office or by post. Except at the café or the club, he sees no other. It is the rarest possible thing to find anyone reading in a tram, and the workman seldom or never reads in the train. In country places it is a local sheet that circulates. Travelling in Twente, I lent my *Rotterdammer* to a factory hand in the carriage with me. At the next station others came in, evidently known to him, asked him what that was he had in his hand, examined its various sheets, A, B, C, and showed by their comments that they had never before handled the famous newspaper.

One need scarcely say more than this to show that Dutch workmen are not so intelligent as ours, and even perhaps to explain partly why. I think it is indisputable that they are not. But we require to distinguish among Dutch workmen. One of the changes of the last ten years which strikes me most, and as manifesting itself in a characteristic way, is the appearance of an upper layer of artisans and of those just above the workman estate, which has ringed itself off by a superior bearing and a new *savoir-vivre*. The Trade school, the Commercial school, the Household school, have all, I do not doubt, contributed to fashion this class, which, though it still suffers, as all Holland does, from a narrowness of horizon, is in education superior to any corresponding class, and indeed has none, in this country.

One of my impressions of Holland ten years ago was that it was less a highly educated country than a country of highly educated people. That is my impression still; with the addition that in the interval many members of

the lower grades of society have, relatively to their position, numbered themselves among the superiorly educated. There remains a mass, in the *bourgeoisie* and the working classes, that does not appear to have moved an inch out of dull and degrading intellectual and social conditions. It might indeed be said that Holland is a highly civilised country with many most uncivilised people.

If you doubt it, go to a Dutch kermis. I was in luck last summer. I had seen rustic kermisses before, but now chanced upon one in a town, on the Thursday of the octave, the citizen's night. The town was Deventer (birthplace of Grotius; where Terburg was burgomaster), busy, thriving, reputed for culture. I slept in the square beside the great church of St. Lebuinus, or at least had ordered a bed there, for to no soul within a mile of it, one fancies, can sleep have come that night. The close was full of caravans, booths, merry-go-rounds, tents, stalls, shooting-galleries, swings, shows with every monstrosity. Fat women in front of their fires were ladling out batter into the hollows of the girdles from which forks deftly tossed off *poffertjes*. The folding irons delivered their crisp *wafels*. Parties of citizens were dining in the inns. At one a company of officers had their kermis feast. You could hear their laughter and the popping of corks through the open windows, in front of which an Italian was grinding his barrel-organ. A sad old hag held out a thin brown claw for their *dubbeltjes*, which a swarthy, red-cheeked, orange-mantled wife beside her acknowledged with laughing kisses blown in to them.

There was music in all the cafés, where people as yet sat sedately listening, drinking beer and flip and black-currant on gin. In a theatre a young Boer from South Africa was doing wonders with a lasso, but

pinked the finger of a boy who volunteered from the audience to hold up a mark for his fancy shooting. The officers' feast was over, and the hostess and her household, resting from the anxieties of the kitchen, were watching the crowds from the open windows; I took a walk in the town. Even the brink was deserted. Only the station road had people on it.

When I returned to the close at midnight the theatre had emptied into the street. The cafés were full to the door, and men and women were seated on the pavement in front of them, and out almost to the stalls. Rascally looking *kermis-gasten* stalked in and out of the shadows of the tents. Hideous spangled women stood on the platforms of the booths, cross-legged under short stiff skirts, talking with the woman counting her money at the entrances. The elder folks were beginning to go off, but the crowd in the street was greater, and taking more space, dancing and shouting in groups. Whistles screamed, the trumpets of the merry-go-rounds blared. Above their sound was the noise of raucous voices, the shouting of the showmen, the shrill, screaming laughter of young girls. "*Hosse-hosse-hosse!*" they yelled, linking arms with their lads, and driving through the crowds. *Juliana moet een broertje hebbe!* The refrain of the Amsterdam feasts was taken up as the kermis song. At a caravan door a woman, with a white, peaked face, sat looking out on Trouble, hearing nothing of the revelry.

At the back of the houses (under my bedroom window) flowed the Yssel, with a bridge across into Gelderland. It was crowded with passengers, mostly sweethearting couples. On the other side I found a wood, with a café still open. The night was lown and starry. There were chairs in a garden among the trees down to the riverside. Groups sat in them round

little tables; sounds of muffled talk and laughter floating from them. They got up, others took their place. Couples entered the garden, and walked round the café to where there were little booths fixed in its dark angles. The wooden piers of the bridge, in tones as soft as the voices of lovers, mixed with the shadows in the water. Across it the houses stood up black against the ruddy glare of torches in the square that leapt upon the church tower.

From deep among the trees rose the shrieks of a woman, *Moord! Moord!* The garden emptied, the nearest couples on the bridge ran over. Figures emerged from the paths through the tall trees. The voice of the woman sounded nearer, in a frenzy of abuse now, and at intervals short sharp growls of a man, "Get home! Get home!" A brother, it turned out, a workman by his voice, driving his tipsy sister across the bridge to the safer side of the Yssel.

The sun rose on the close, still a-glare and raucous. The whisperings by the bridge continued in the morning light. Groups on the strand standing laughing and talking, suddenly seized by a gust of the kermis madness, leapt, linked arms, and rushed off: "*Hosse-hosse-hosse!*" into the square.

At eight o'clock next morning when I came out after breakfast, the white-covered Guelders' carts were driving to the brink, and the farmers' wives in their white-lace caps and black bodices, with gold neck ornaments—the most elegant of Dutch costumes—were setting out their butter and eggs before the silent shows. But to-night the boers were to have *their* kermis.

A boer kermis (and Deventer's too) requires a broader canvas than mine; and some of its scenes are too broad for my canvas. Mr. Querido describes it as a licentious orgy, and if the stranger does not see all

that his native realistic pen describes, he has no difficulty in imagining the worst in such a setting. And he asks, How comes the kermis to flourish still? Magistrates and ministers inveighed against it for three centuries in vain. Its suppression in the cities leads to riots, and the masses get back their lost kermis in every Juliana or other feast. Anyone who has spent a night in Amsterdam *en fête* knows the delirium, or the paroxysms rather, of its hilarity. The populace wants it, and often the better classes tolerate it. Some of them have spoken to me indignantly of its being put an end to in their village—but to be sure an Antirevolutionnair was the executioner. My hostess in a country house near Deventer that week said to me: "Oh yes! we always allow our maids out until two o'clock on kermis night." Is it that many in the upper classes understand how the patient masses require a safety valve? Some among themselves exhibit an *abandon* on occasion, when free of the repression of routine. Grave seigneurs will caper with the giddiest undergraduates at the lustrum feasts. I have heard stories of the sudden "daftness" of usually orderly merchant companies. Perhaps the Dutch populace knows its needs. A native historian has explained their wild outbreaks of licence in the seventeenth century by their lives being empty of interests. They are empty of interests still, and I cannot think of a better reason for their orgies. One night of the year they will have to react from its deadly monotony, and *de bloemetjes buiten zetten*, as they call "painting the town red."

It is not in school instruction that the masses in Holland still fall behind, but in self-discipline, and an intelligent ordering of themselves in decent behaviour in public. This is evidently recognised in the country itself. A greater emphasis is beginning to be laid on the civilising influences of education. I find an illustra-

tion of this in the school organised by the employers of Enschede, to one of whom I am obliged for showing me over it. One of the conditions of children being taken on at the cotton mills is that they shall attend this school for ten hours a week for the first year, and four for the second. The school dates from long before the introduction of the compulsory principle, and is carried on now as a continuation school, for confirming the knowledge gained at the elementary institutions. Music is conspicuous in its schedule. The care with which it is planned is shown by the selection of a headmaster from the Navigation School at Rotterdam, who had gained experience there in treating casual and irregular pupils from the Rhine boats. I cannot speak too admiringly of the enthusiasm and competence of himself and his staff in seeking to realise the aim of the direction to surround these boys and girls with refining influences during the school hours of their working day. It is with no reflection, therefore, upon this excellent institution that I suggest that a general habit of travelling third class, for example, and a spirit of responsibility engendered throughout the whole body of society, would have a more civilising effect upon the masses in Holland than all her educational institutions, admirable as these are.

CHAPTER XXI

POLITICS IN THE CHURCH

TO two countrymen of ours whom I met in Holland I put this point on the same day: Did they think it a very religious country? "Frightfully!" was the answer of one. The other considered a moment, and then said impressively, "Here they do not seem to me to have any religion at all."

I could not inform myself how they came by these opinions, which are equally of small weight. Yet I can imagine either being held by the stranger who had been two months in the country. Neither would remain the judgment of anyone who had lived in it twelve, if sympathy had been joined to understanding. After twelve months in Holland, indeed, no estimate of her in any respect can be come by easily. I recall a conversation with still another countryman of mine, who had spent many years among the Dutch, and knew them. It eased my passage among the entanglements of their ecclesiastical politics. But about religion—he had lived too long among them to be able to express an opinion.

I have said that I do not know how the two views I have quoted were come by, but it is not difficult to guess. Religion in Holland, like everything else there, has well-marked frontiers. You find a Frisian among the cruder Saxons, or a merry Frank from Maestricht neighbouring

hard-headed Groningers,—stranger birds, generally with rather a look of moulting. So you find a Mennonite at the table of the scorers, or the unco' guid beside very superior persons, comical or uncomfortable opposites as you care to take it. But the racial boundaries are not better delimited than those of Modern and Orthodox, of the indifferents and the Antirevolutionnair.

Thus the views of the brief visitant are highly coloured according to the circles that receive him; he may very easily never enter or dream of others where they would be speedily neutralised. It is not difficult to imagine how the first whom I have cited found himself in households—which and where we are to see later—that observed all religious ordinances, concerned themselves with Church work, kept the Sabbath strictly, and even were active at bazaars. He had landed among the “kirky folk,” and imagined that they reflected the nation. To the second it was represented by his hosts, within whose doors not even a rumour of these things entered, or, if it came, was recognised by a jest, or a growl at a “Clerical Government.” Indeed, he indicated to me the grounds of his opinion. “I have not,” he said, “slept under a Dutch roof from which anybody ever set out to church.”

I think he may have been wrong in his facts. Most likely, though he did not know it, the cook went to church, if two or three of the Doleerenden gathered together there, and the gardener's wife, and possibly the gardener himself. His hostess also probably went the Sunday after his departure. And his host, even if he never entered the church all the rest of the year, was certainly present on New Year's Eve, before the family gathered to drink negus round the table. A yearly attendance at church does not stamp one religious, but do two attendances, or fifty-and-two?

Both my witnesses, in a word, are put out of court by their prejudices. They were both measuring Holland's religious life by their own home rule of church attendance, and perhaps Sabbath observance. And her religious life is not to be understood so.

There is necessary first, if we would understand it, some knowledge of Dutch ecclesiastical politics. Holland, since 1579, has been officially Calvinist. The majority of its people are Calvinists still, at least nominally. So is the Court, true to the great tradition of the House of Orange; and so of course is the class which follows the Court. There is no anxiety or irritation in Holland over the Coronation oath. The Dutch know the flash-point of logic. When they declared all religious creeds free and equal before the law, they removed from the constitution the clause enforcing one of them upon the Sovereign.

"But if Queen Wilhelmina," said one of her subjects to me, with a menacing laugh—"if Queen Wilhelmina were to turn Catholic, I believe she would be put across the frontier!"

This was not himself a Calvinist who was speaking, but I could see that he would not wish the Queen to be any other than Calvinist. That is in its way tolerance, even of Sovereigns. It would clearly cause a scandal did she adhere to any of the Reformed Churches (for there are several) except the old one, *De Nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk*.

This Church of the Court, though not connected with the State, is still the Church of the nation, and hereafter I shall refer to it as the National Church, to distinguish it from the many schisms and "off-cuttings" (*gereformeerde kerken*) which have reformed themselves out of her. Their name is Legion. When the Dutch emerged from the troubled period of the French occupation, many

brought with them the borrowed garments of the Revolution. The National Church was strongly Rationalist. It was a National Church, but disestablished ; or it might be more true to say, a Church in process of being disestablished, for the change was not made by the stroke of a pen. The Remonstrants, speaking generally, represented the views of a very large section, but the Remonstrants represented also an old quarrel, by no means only religious, and they added comparatively few to their numbers. The battle between the modern thought and the older shade of faith was therefore fought out in the Church itself ; and when separations took place, it was the orthodox who cut themselves off, and only the extremely orthodox.

Though disestablished, the Church of the Netherlands yet retained something of the sanction of an establishment. There were strong steadying influences within itself making for its preservation. An influential middle and moderate section held it together in spite of the disintegrating forces of the extremists. It does so to-day. The battle in the Church is still over a defined creed. Probably a fourth, it may be even a third, of its clergymen and laymen are avowed Unitarians. One would think that for such now, at any rate, if not before, a home is ready among the Remonstrants, who bind by no creed, but impose upon their members only the expression of a wish to assist religious life on the basis of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, true to its freedom and forbearance one to another. Yet though many in the Church sympathise with the Remonstrants, and have much interest in them, comparatively few have gone over to their communion. Attachment to the pew is stronger than the logic of a common creed. The Liberals remain in the Church, and the greater moderating body in that Church secures them in it, though not sharing their views.



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A MOTHER'S CARE
FROM THE PAINTING BY JOSEF ISRAELS

It is, as I have said, the extremists at the other, the orthodox end, who still come out.

There is no understanding Holland, however, without a little knowledge of her other religious communions. Some of them, of course, have a historical as well as an immediate interest. The Remonstrants, already spoken of, for example, carry us back to the early years of the seventeenth century. A few months ago they celebrated the tercentenary of the famous Remonstrance, still in their possession, the voice of which was certainly the voice of Oldenbarneveldt, and the hand (it is believed) that of Uitenbogærd. Condemned by the Synod of Dort, their leaders exiled or executed, their pastors deposed, the Remonstrants reached a greater calm after Frederick Henry came into power, and in it pursued their persistent and never popular way. Not until 1798, no earlier than the Jews in fact, were they placed on an equality with other confessions. Theirs is the Church of the Moderns, the intellectuals, necessarily a handful (though in recent years an increasing handful), which in the nature of things never has included the poor. Alone among the religious communities of Holland, therefore, they have no great charities.

The first Lutheran congregations in Holland, again, were formed in the sixteenth century, and early in the next the body was definitely established in the country. Naturally, they received much support from Germany, which until a hundred years ago supplied them with most of their ministers and educated the remainder. The two sections of them, which live harmoniously together, represent the opposite tendencies of religion throughout Holland: the Evangelical Lutherans stand for the old faith; the Re-established Lutherans have since 1791 shifted ground with the modern movement, and show the larger increase of adherents, though more

recently the older section have revived their influence and numbers.

The Baptists or Mennonites, a more particular Dutch brand, trace back to Menno Simons, the converted Roman priest who, in 1536, gathered together in the North of Holland the scattered remnants of the Anabaptists. Since then they have counted among their comparatively few members an unusually large number of great names. With the oldest lineage of any of the Dutch religious bodies, they are to-day found still walking a strongly evangelical way, and though they no longer hold aloof from the world, they continue to refuse an oath.

Numerous in Holland, the Jews have found in Amsterdam a New Jerusalem. The Portuguese appeared the earlier, building their first synagogue in 1597. They have now head synagogues at Amsterdam and the Hague, and one ring synagogue. The German Jews, among whom German has lapsed in favour of Dutch for over half a century, followed with theirs in 1636.

Meanwhile Rome for nearly three centuries had been patiently waiting. The old Archbishopric of Utrecht had ceased to be. Roman Catholics, though not persecuted, were barely tolerated, and all the offices of the State were closed to them. The union with Belgium bade them hope, but so little concord was there in that union that each side was less confirmed in its own principles than determined to oppose those of the other. The Constitution of 1848, however, gave Catholics the freedom and equality enjoyed under it by all religious professions, and in 1853 the Hierarchy of the sixteenth century was re-established.

But there is another Archbishop in Utrecht. Side by side with the Romans, the old Catholics or, as they

call themselves, "the old Episcopal Clergy of the Netherlands" (for they disavow the name of Jansenists), seek to carry on directly the tradition of the Church in Holland. Good Catholics, they recognise the supremacy of the Pope, regularly informing him of the new election of a bishop, to have it as regularly declared void at Rome. Opposed to the teaching and practice of the Jesuits, they profess the Augustinian Doctrines of sin and grace, but reject the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and the Pope's Infallibility. They are only a few thousands in all. An "Old Catholic" revival in Germany encouraged them in their faith, and so, more recently still, have the overtures of sanguine Anglicans who dream of uniting these Dutch Jansenists and the Greek Church with themselves.

All the religious bodies that have been mentioned have equal rights. Adherents of all or of none of them, and not those of the National Church only, as was the case to the fall of the Republic, are admitted to the offices of the State. The State protects and supervises all Churches in the interest of public order. It follows Spinoza's doctrine of liberty: the only limit it sets to freedom in religion is interference with other people's freedom. Ecclesiastical bodies are insured liberty in regard to things concerning religion and its practice within their own folds; but the orders of their institution and administration must be communicated to Government. Without the Sovereign's consent a foreigner may not hold office in a Church. Ecclesiastical officials are not permitted to wear their robes outside church buildings or enclosed places, save at those ceremonials, such as Roman Catholic processions, which were allowed previously to 1848. That is why the Salvation Army, much to its embarrassment, is compelled to hold its open-air meetings screened. The State carefully seeks to preserve

from offence the feelings of any religious body, and it has so shrewdly anticipated possible causes of offence that it controls the tolling of church bells,—a matter out of which actions at law have arisen before now in other Calvinist countries.

Its foresight, however, was less conspicuous in another matter. In 1798 the possessions of the Roman Catholic Church, which had passed into the hands of the Government, were secularised, and the State undertook to pay the salaries of the clergymen of the establishment for a certain period, after which the Church was to be left to herself. Following Louis Napoleon, who recognised the injustice of the Churches being all on an equality, yet not equal sharers from this source, the Constitution of 1815 secured the salaries, pensions, and other incomes from Government to preachers and teachers, not of the National Church only, but of the Roman also and of all Christian sects. Save in the case of certain Churches and congregations which refuse them, therefore—the Baptists, for example, only accept them when they are too poor to pay their minister, and that is seldom—these payments are still rendered. No provision, however, was made for future “off-cuttings,” and thus the Christian Reformed Church and the united Reformed Churches mentioned earlier, and in fact all bodies that have come into existence after 1815, have no claim upon State aid, and do not get it should they require it or desire it.

The Church, like the whole country, was shaken by the controversy over the restoration of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in 1853, which was no more than a logical result of the freedom given to all sects by the Constitution of 1848. The controversy resulting from it, and gathering up the discordant elements in Church and State, was largely political: it gave no

occasion for schism within the Church; but it had a large bearing on Church politics, and above all it roused both Calvinists and Romans to an activity which shows its effects still.

But the great fight was over Education. The story of the Dutch Churches here merges into that of Dutch politics. Protestantism, already rallied to its standard by the Catholic question in 1853, attacked the policy of the neutral school, initiated in 1857. Neutrality was the great plank in the platform of the Liberal party, who dreamed too sanguinely that it was supported on a basis of reason and knowledge. They forgot the persistence of the historical influence of the effects of the war of liberation, for example, upon the daily lives of the people, manifested to this hour—in their art and architecture, and their festivals,—and how impossible in consequence is the teaching of Dutch history on “neutral” lines. Circumstances favoured the Liberals; but their triumph created in opposition a body of Protestant opinion, a body inspired by a bold and fierce Calvinist spirit, with which every statesman and political thinker in the country had failed to reckon. It burns fiercely still.

It is worth our while to note that there was no great division, like that of Church and Dissent, to mark off religious from civil politics. So far, at any rate, as a foreigner can see, the two are inextricably mixed. Nor, as in some other countries, did any serious difference within the Church arise out of administration. The only two parties were the Orthodox and the Moderns; and they were found in all the Churches, and also in the State. The Church of the Netherlands itself during the whole period has been engaged in an endeavour after compromise, and has succeeded just to the extent which I have indicated. On the one hand, the Modern stream has rather flowed away into the channel of a certain cold

piety, which attracts no popular following, if not into another of vague idealism or avowed indifference. We have seen how in the residue there is a tolerated Unitarianism. And at the other extreme, the Orthodox in large numbers have found a harbour of their own in the united Reformed Church.

That body was fashioned by one man out of the fanatical Calvinism roused by the neutral school: the immediate occasion of its separation was the liberalism of the Higher Education. For many in the Church the instruction at the free official universities became too advanced; the Higher Criticism within the Church itself threatened the faith in the supremacy of Holy Scripture; and in 1880 they founded a university at Amsterdam, called by them "Free" in another sense; and there appeared among the professors at it Dr. Abraham Kuyper, a remarkable figure, destined to loom large in subsequent Dutch politics. Now the Church did not recognise this Free University as a nursery for its ministry, and in 1886 there was an open rupture, resulting in the appearance of the Church Reformed and Doleance, otherwise the Doleerenden. A few years later, these and some other Christian and Reformed Churches, of strange and various origins, not to be sought here, were united; enough to say that they have become the most living, certainly the most exciting, institution in the country.

Amid these conditions there has arisen a situation, the curious, pitiful, amusing phases of which (for it shows them all) are only to be understood completely when we know their political significance as well. I will illustrate it from a concrete local case. The town of Enkhuizen, one of the "dead cities" of the Zuider Zee, has a population of 8000. This population is served by twelve churches. They are—

- 2 National Churches ;
- 1 Christian Reformed ;
- 1 Do. do. building ;
- 1 Baptist (*Doopsgezinden*) ;
- 1 Catholic Apostolic ;
- 1 Lutheran ;
- 1 Old Roman ;
- 1 Roman Catholic ;
- 1 Free Reformed ;
- 1 Synagogue ;
- 1 Other (whose precise designation I forget).

There is nothing unusual in Enkhuizen in this respect : as a stranger passing through it, whose eye had become accustomed to the spectacle of this kirkly activity everywhere, I had my attention attracted by these details on a plan of the town. They make, in no other sense, a selected case. The two National churches, the Zuiderkerk and the Westerkerk, are both, as it happens, in their several ways unusually fine. The first, with its well-known tower, has recently been restored at a cost of fl. 50,000. The Westerkerk, an even more interesting structure, possesses a choir-screen of the sixteenth century which is considered the finest of its kind in the country. Attached to these two churches, jointly, are three clergymen or dominees, for each of whom there is a pastorie or manse; pointing to the fact that there was still a third church in the days of the town's earlier greatness. On the Sunday which I spent in Enkhuizen there was a service in the Zuiderkerk in the morning, at the comfortable hour of eleven. In the evening, when I was keeping a noteful eye upon a few hundred places of worship in the surrounding country, the Westerkerk was open, I was informed: If the congregation there was no larger than that I saw in the other church in the morning, both might have worshipped in an aisle. There was a large and

punctual gathering of the Romans at 8 a.m., and (I believe) again later in the day; that of the Christian Reformed was considerable; and it was zealous, I judged from its demeanour in dispersing. Various handfuls of the 8000 souls found communion together elsewhere throughout the town.

Among these various bodies there was, I suppose, no mutual condemnation, except between the Romans on the one side and the assorted heretics on the other. One cannot be sure, of course: these free Reformers probably have their doubts about Christian Reformed, else they would not be isolated. Something pure in worship may be preserved in their Zion that has been lost in the Zuiderkerk; but, if so, I cannot imagine it, though bred among the niceties of Anti-Burghers and E.U.'s. And in a word, I ask the comparative concord of Scotland to witness to the disruption of Dutch Protestantism.

To understand the wider significance of this local situation, it must be remembered that in Holland the Roman Catholics are a full third of the population; that the stalwarts, mostly *kleine luyden* (the "little people"), on the right of Protestantism, most assured of the damnable heresy of Rome, have nevertheless come into political alliance with her, and in this way make the party in political power; and that the Protestant Left stretches away through the moderates and Protestant Bond of the Church and the Higher Criticism, within and without it, to the undefinable body of laymen who attend Old Year services before going home to drink in the New in mulled "bisschop." It is easy to prognosticate how curious a chapter must that be which tells of the *débâcle* of Liberalism before the assault of the "little people."

I have sought, so far as I found it possible to do so in a brief chapter, to present the ecclesiastical side of a

situation, which it will fall to me to complete in another upon politics which follows.

The outstanding fact in modern Dutch politics is that the passion of Protestantism, which burned up in 1854 on the restoration of the Roman hierarchy, was fed with a cruder Calvinism, and became a political instrument for the discomfort of the Liberal party. But the Gothic attack only succeeded with the aid of the Romans. Orthodoxy in the Church found its rough counterpart in the State in the party of the modern Antirevolutionnaires, a term whose meaning will become evident later. And Antirevolutionnaire and Roman Catholic, combining, routed the Liberals, and in coalition now rule the country with a majority in both Chambers.

It was necessary to anticipate the political chapter so far, in order that the reader may understand how a spirit of bitterness manifests itself to-day, though less possibly than yesterday, in Dutch ecclesiastical and lay politics alike. In the next chapter the theme is to be the influence of this situation on the daily life of the people.

CHAPTER XXII

THE CHURCH AND THE HOME

THE most obvious impression to reproduce in this chapter is the pervasiveness of religious dissension.

That between Roman Catholic and Protestant (political alliances apart) runs necessarily strong, but it also runs deep, and its signs are not on the surface. The predominantly Protestant provinces are those which first revolted against Spain; long after the war of liberation, Brabant and Limburg remained under Flemish and Catholic influence, and it is in these two provinces that the Romans are massed to-day. They are noticeably numerous in some Protestant countrysides, the Westland for example, or the bulb-growing regions. Isolated communities in the north, wholly Catholic, like Volendam and Laren and Rysenburg, are accounted for, I suppose, by the presence in them in the sixteenth century of a specially influential, probably spiritual and well-living priest; or perhaps, like isolated costumes, merely by later casual migrations. Where the two religions come in contact they live in harmony, or only in the rivalry of aggressive good works. Still, they keep to themselves. There is a Catholic circle in Leeuwarden, say, even as there is one at the Hague.

The dissension I am thinking of is between Protestant and Protestant. Quite possibly, let me remark, the bizarre

aspect of the situation, taking the eye of the foreign observer, tempts him to exaggerate its features. The discord certainly would be less conspicuous were it not for sensational political events I have mentioned—the coalition between Rome and Calvinism, and the defeat of a specially intellectual Liberalism by a really stupendous throw-back to a seventeenth-century theory of government. It amuses some and disgusts others in the country itself; but it is possibly the alien onlooker only who enjoys the full significance of this eruptive orthodoxy in the land of the Higher Criticism.

Custom has staled the religious fight for the Dutch. The present generation have grown up with an education question battered in it. So, as I shall be reminded, have the present generation of Englishmen; but with a difference. Elementary education is taken much more seriously in Holland than with us, and its results upon the Dutch boy when he has reached thirteen determine his future as educational results determine the future of scarcely any English boy at any age whatever. Further, almost all Dutch boys, as has been seen, receive the same elementary instruction. The haphazard method of our private schools is unknown in Holland. The only choice for most parents there is between the public school and a private, which is not private in our sense at all. In the Dutch public school the instruction is strictly secular. In the private school it is theoretically, and most often in fact, the same as in the public, with an added religious colouring. From the fight over the "neutral" school, the victorious private schools have emerged, blazoning themselves "Christian" and "Schools with the Bible," but under strict supervision in their educational standard. The majority of children attend the public school, but the numbers in the minority grow. A third of the parents have repudiated the "neutral"

school. In a word, the educational question is more vital in Holland than with ourselves, its religious issues are more vivid, and few households can evade a decision upon it.

That is one side of Dutch life on which religion presses. I can think of few that it does not affect. It disrupts, for example, the organisations of the workmen, and even prejudices the combinations of the masters. Probably between a third and a fourth of Dutch trades-unionists are associated in confessional bonds, and these not all Catholic. Besides the Bureau of Roman Catholic Trade Organisations, there is a Christian National Trades Bond, of both Protestants and Catholics; while Protestantism has its Christian Workman's Bond, more or less non-political, and the strong society "Patrimonium," of Antirevolutionnair colour. In innumerable interests of Dutch life, petty and great, similar distinctions appear. I do not think I am wrong in saying that there is a Christian Goat Society (which sounds modern enough). The co-operative agricultural Loan Banks of Eindhoven and Utrecht have now a sturdy competitor in the Christian Bank at Alkmaar. The point need not be pressed farther. It is evidently difficult in a Dutch home to escape the religious question.

It is easy, on the other hand, to escape religious ordinances, and it seems to me that certain classes of Society as uniformly avoid as others punctiliously observe them. But now we are in a world of perplexities. Religious life in Holland is full of Dutch opposites, and differs from that among ourselves to an extent such as probably few home readers of this book can imagine. Let me give an example. The political movement known as Antirevolutionnair recruits its most strenuous fighting forces from the Reformed bodies who have come out from the National Church. But it would be a

ludicrous error to conclude that the Antirevolutionnaires are all dissenters or (being dissenters) must therefore be Liberal. "Antirevolutionnaire" is a political distinction, applied to a conservative force too wide for any or all Church communions. The reader who would understand the religious situation in Holland must put from his mind the distinctions of Churchmen and Dissenters, as he must for the moment those of Liberalism and reactionary Rome. The salient distinctions are Modern and Orthodox.

The Orthodox are found in all the Churches; but Orthodoxy is strong only in a few classes. It is entrenched, if not aggressive, in Court, and what may loosely be termed County circles. It is a tradition in them; a fashion, its critics call it, with jibes that pursue the devout everywhere. The majority of the people on the land, too, are orthodox, since they are conservative. Such an exception as the modernity of Groningen is already almost a conservative tradition. And finally, as has been said, the fighting strength of Orthodoxy lies in the small *bourgeoisie*, the "little people," of all Churches, and mostly marshalled under Dr. Kuyper's political banner. Now, it is not my impression that the religious life of Holland is wholly comprised in the Orthodox—I know it is not. But it is among them that religion is strongly professed, while in the professional and the middle classes generally, which are the strongholds of the Modern, the profession of religion is as strikingly absent.

These, indeed, are broad generalisations, subject to many modifications and exceptions that will occur at once to a native; but they appear to me to be true enough to justify the remark earlier, that it was easy to guess among which classes our countryman moved who found the Dutch extraordinarily religious, and among

which the other who could discover in them no religion at all.

It is significant that by this indirect road we have reached the broad social distinctions of politics also—and indeed it is evident how the religious and political sentiments, acting and reacting upon each other, have given the Conservative elements a cohesion which the Liberal elements as noticeably lack. We may sympathise with the anger and disgust of those who have honestly striven—yet how unsuccessfully!—against the old bugbear of Holland, this conjunction of religion and politics; but do these feelings not prejudice their views of the quality of the forces at work?

It sometimes seems to the foreigner that the Anti-revolutionnair gets scant justice from his opponents in Holland, and that there is among them too virulent a scorn of the *fyne*, as the pious are there called. It is impossible that behind this public turmoil there is not much individual religious fervour. With the outbreak of churchly activities, there has surely come a revival of the religious spirit. The Reformed Churches are strenuous, as we should expect the struggle they have come through to make them. They have suffered great sacrifices in money for the profession of their faith in innumerable churches and schools—lamentable waste it may be—that have sprung up as thickly as those of the Roman Catholics themselves. Simultaneously there has been an awakening in the National Church also, and in all sections of it, orthodox, ethical, modern. A humble class in the nation, in whom lodged a singularly unadulterated Calvinism, found a voice in politics,—and is it impossible that it has called forth a confession of faith and an activity in good works from others of greatly more liberal convictions?

That is a speculation by the way, suggested by a

certain intellectual snobbery in the opponents of the "little people" not to be omitted from the causes of dissension. The impression I wish to convey is that an evangelical religion is active in Holland to-day, as it was not, say, ten years ago, and with results that often are countenanced by others besides the orthodox. It is not always easy, indeed, to discriminate between the manifestations of this religious conviction and those of the altruistic spirit which has cut across faith and no-faith alike. Both seem to meet, for example, in the new care for Missions. On the other hand, much recent legislation of a Puritan cast betrays an inspiration which the enemy never fails to acknowledge in a phrase: "More Clerical government!"

The pious among the upper classes I have spoken of do not deny themselves all worldly distractions. They dance, they go to the theatre, they play cards, though not always on Sunday. Those in the humbler classes do none of these things on any day, but all the week through pursue their ideal in a strict and very narrow round. Theirs is often a painful religiosity. One gets glimpses among them sometimes of an extraordinarily crude theology. A Sabbatarianism shows itself which is more rigid than that of the *fyne* twenty years ago, some of whom were not averse from a game after the service of the church. A Dutch friend has told me how it was in the house of his grandparents. They were what is called "*steil Orthodox*," unbending stalwarts. The Bible was always read before breakfast, and the household usually went twice on Sundays to the church, of which the old gentleman was an office-bearer. Yet every Sunday evening a round game of cards was played for some trifling stakes, and between the sermons the parents amused themselves with backgammon. Possibly the Hebraic, Old-Testament notion held that the Sabbath

finished at sundown. The *fyne* are less liberal now.

The new Governor-General of the Indies, an Orthodox soldier, has been discountenancing official presence at the Sunday afternoon parade in the Waterloo Plein. That, at any rate, is not playing for popularity in Batavia. It is worse than doing away with the Kermis at home, the daring offence of some Orthodox burgomasters. The pious have their own *pédanterie*.

Signs of the times are sometimes derived from experiences no less trivial than the two which follow. The other day I was visiting with a friend and his family the monuments in a church, and a curious discovery we made surprised him into an exclamation, usual enough in Dutch speech, which smacks of irreverence. He was there and then challenged and rebuked by the beadle who stood by. Such an expression in the ears of his children! Like every other man in the building but myself, the beadle was wearing his hat, but what he did not take off for the sacred place he did not keep on to deliver his sermon. And so surprised was my friend by his decorous admonition that he took it like a lamb, though his is not a lamb-like nature.

It was only a night or two later that I was dining in a restaurant in Alkmaar and observed two young men at the next table—of the yeoman class, one would have said at home—silently saying grace before beginning their meal. I mentioned the incident—surprising anywhere to-day—to Dutch friends on returning to Amsterdam, and was laughingly assured by them that I was mistaken. “No one did that sort of thing in Holland;” the mind and ideals of one-half of Holland are strangely dark to the other. Twice within a week later I saw this bidding of a blessing upon “the ceremony of manducation” by commercial travellers, one in

Groningen, the other in a village in Friesland. I doubt if that could have been witnessed anywhere in Holland ten years ago.

But whether church works are more and religious interests keener in the households of Holland than once they were, their volume is small compared with that in our own country. It could only have seemed extraordinary to the stranger deceived by the tremendous energies of ecclesiastical politics and the pervasiveness of the religious question. And as strong as the impression these make, is the other that the Protestant Church has lost its hold on the nation.

The national Church has not suffered in prestige through being disestablished. One never doubts which communion is meant when men talk of "the Church." It imposes itself on the land by many fine and spacious fabrics, which State, commune, congregation, and private citizens in Dutch fashion combine to preserve. The most splendid of the charities for which Holland is famous are administered by it. And as we have seen, also, this Church contains all the shades of spiritual conviction, and lack of conviction. The nation is represented by its pews if not in them. Its Catholicism is its weakness as well as its strength: The prosperity of the Reformed Churches testifies to the popularity of no compromise. The tolerance it imagines it fosters does not fail often to warm into intolerance in pulpit and pew. "Oh! we don't go to the Church. The dominee is Antirevolutionnair." How often have I heard that! And how often I know to interpret it that were the dominee more to their liking they might sometimes drop in!

Separation from the State does not account for the decline in the Church's authority; and perhaps we need

not go further for a reason than that in the heat of polemics the people were forgotten. Great things were mistaken for small. Even in the congregations the fervour encouraged was often that of debate. Church government was not free from the slightly haughty exclusiveness of all Dutch governments: It seems as if there, as everywhere in Holland, the opportunity was missed of elevating the mass by entrusting it with responsibility. The "little people" were kept waiting too long without the voice which the Church might have given them with advantage to the State. And, possibly, but for politics, woman would have been taken into the Church's counsels, and won a personal devotion for it, which is what it most lacks.

At the same time, the Church has kept free from becoming a social affair, and one must admire the instinctive self-respect of the Dutch which comes out in a hundred instances besides this of declining to make a tea-party of a church feast, or to encroach on the solemnities of religion in the garb of bazaar mummers. Nevertheless another of one's impressions to be recorded is the failure of the Church to produce a reverent spirit.

There is, so far as I can see, little alteration in the order of worship in Dutch churches. The picture of ten years ago remains as it was, without so much as a change in the clergyman's text. The boer strolls to the kirk, perplex'd wi' leisure, like Stevenson's Lothian ploughman, and, like him, gossips at the door until the last "jow" of the bell. But he smokes also at the door, and even within it. I have seen a deacon with his hat on his head and a cigar in his lips even in the consistory itself, and no dominee reproving him; and men sometimes keep their hats on their heads throughout the service

—though it was in an Amsterdam Church I saw this, and they were sitting in the sombre waste of pews behind the pulpit.

The hard-featured, clean-shaven men, erect through the long prayer in front of their seats, with their peaked caps before their eyes, look reverent enough; more so than the women—all save the few in native costume rather over-dressed—who sit by themselves downstairs or across the passage with their feet on the *stoofjes*, and sniffing eau-de-Cologne from their folded handkerchiefs. The atmosphere, physically and spiritually, is a little dreary. A chill has settled in the untenanted spaces round the enclosed "body of the kirk." The elders look forlorn in their high pew, facing the enormous, brass-bound Bibles. There is a cauldlike smell of soft soap in the air.

Whether or not anything suggested in these impressions explains it—the weariness of ecclesiastical politics, the anti-clerical feeling it has fostered, the narrowness of the faithful, a primitive and often a cold service—the Protestant Church has failed to convict the "civilised" classes (to grant them their own title) of the duty of regularly attending its ordinances. I am not now thinking of the indifferents, who are found in all countries, or of the avowed non-believers (in Holland unusually numerous), but of the many devout souls in this large section of Dutch society who apparently do not find the need, who presumably have not found the benefits, of attendance at Divine worship.

I am trying to present a situation that is manifestly interesting and unusual, yet is one that the stranger may well hesitate to discuss. If I say that closer acquaintance with this particular section of Dutch life, in which our countryman could discover no religion at

all, reveals in it a very wide simple and deep piety, a faith and acquiescence in an overruling Providence, I am stating an experience of my own, corroborated by others with better opportunities of judging. But besides this passive Orthodoxy, there is also a very general and bold freedom of thought on religious questions, and frank avowal of a sceptical position. A Dutch gentleman told me that once, travelling in England, he fell in with a scholar of Oxford, learned, gracious, excellently informed, whom he companioned on a stage of his journey. They had many opportunities for conversation, and once the native, enlightening the Dutch stranger about our institutions, touched upon the tenets of the Church in a way that led the other to ask in surprise, "Do I understand, then, that there are great numbers in your country who believe . . . ?" mentioning a point of doctrine that in Holland is discussed without the least reserve. The Englishman stiffened, and turned upon him severely. "I *hope* so, Sir!" he said. Even in recalling the incident my Dutch acquaintance showed his bewilderment at the attitude it discovered. "The man," he mused, "was so evidently a scholar, and so intelligent. . . ." I do not think that pages would better illustrate the relative positions in the two countries in this matter; and, on the wider question, it is not forcing the contrast beyond endurance to say that as the man of education among ourselves is put upon his defence when he disavows Church and creed, so is he in Holland who openly associates himself with either.

That there is often intolerance, even arrogance, in the avowal of negation cannot be denied. It sometimes shows itself, matching a very crude politics, among the teachers in the public schools: the evidence and testimony I have of this did not come through the

Antirevolutionnaires, whose campaign it goes far to justify. Yet its volume may easily be exaggerated by one who forgets the element of political bitterness in the discussion of religious questions. By nature the Hollander is religious. Scornfully as he may reject the doctrines of Calvinism, he has inherited its fruits in his blood. Even if history did not tell us so, we could be sure that Holland was fostered upon the Institutes. And just as, in the next chapter, we are to discover an amelioration of the strain in the political situation, so I think my last impression is not wrong of a spiritual development that may largely relieve that of the religious as well.

Indeed the quality of the "new conscience," as I call it to myself, is indicated by its not being easily separated, even in one's mind, from the new humanitarian spirit in politics. Among the upper middle class, in which it seems to show itself most clearly, and especially in the rising commercial section of it in which education is more modern, I notice a sub-conscious reaction against a materialism which is to be attributed to a hundred circumstances, and not to any one. The policy of the neutral school had behind it no tradition, as in France, to accomplish the irreligious work of tearing faith from the hearts of men. And yet it is by no means certain that Dutch Liberalism has not for many "extinguished the lights of heaven." If the teacher's ranks are crowded with materialists by training, is it doubtful what will be found in the pupils? A Frenchman whom I met in Holland recently, told me that in Zeeland, at an inn table d'hôte frequented by residents, there was one who blatantly proclaimed his atheism to the company. I expressed the belief that this island atheist (so we talked of him) was an unusual spectacle in Holland. "Ah!" mused my acquaintance,

"perhaps he thought, as I am a Frenchman, to find me in his company."

It is indeed something quite different from that insular crudity which appears in the attitude towards religious belief of the educated in Holland whom I have been so freely discussing. Is it fanciful to say that it also is influenced by the ingrained respect for the expert, the determination to exclude from every province the amateur, which demands a diploma from the adventure schoolmaster, deprives the country of the benefit ours enjoys of the services of the untrained magistrate in the police court, and in the face of the world's practice refuses to adopt the jury system? Does this account for the *malaise* that prevails in Holland to-day? Yet the Protestantism which shrinks from permitting a man to be an amateur between himself and his God is surely coming wonderfully round in the circle to the Priestly pretension.

This, at any rate, is what chiefly interests in the situation: the battle has been frankly joined on creed. It does not by any means divide men up as regards their Church. It divides them whether they have a Church or not. There is no particular fashion of church-going, and those who so wish honestly stay away. It is largely an accident that a man is a member of the national Church and not a Remonstrant, a Lutheran and not a Reformed Christian. Much, that is, depends upon which of these his father was. If it is no accident that makes a man a Doleerende, that is because the Doleerenden have come into existence with the present struggle, and are, so to say, an *ad hoc* body.

And what the fight is for which they have been created is not for a moment kept in doubt. Be you Remonstrant or Lutheran, or Baptist or Walloon,

the question is, "Do you believe in Miracles, and in the Divinity of Christ?" Perhaps to that might be added, "and in a special Revelation to Israel?" That is the issue in this Orthodox and Modern struggle.

CHAPTER XXIII

CALVIN IN THE BINNENHOF

POLITICS in modern Holland might be compared to a Dutch waterway which burst its dikes and overflowed upon the land. A stream that had long run in two main branches, though not within very well-defined banks, left its courses and was lost in a morass. A period of draining and empoldering and normalising followed, at the end of which it was hoped that it had regained a normal bed. But the hope was premature. The waters are still "out."

To interpret this figure is the task of the present chapter, and there is only one place where it can be performed with the appropriate atmosphere about us. That is the Binnenhof, the hub of Holland, the Provinces in miniature, the tabernacle of their history.

All this the group of red-grey buildings on the Vyver at the Hague is to one who knows its story; but it is not to be read on its face. No classic ground that I remember, indeed, more than that between the Noordeinde and the Plein, requires that you shall dig for yourself to find its treasure. The unlearned stranger in Edinburgh, one thinks, for example, could not go between Holyrood and the Castle without experiencing from the appearances on his route some thrill, vague, but convincing, of unprobed romance. The walk from the Binnenhof to the Old Court would surely leave him cold. The

Quarter is charming, vivacious, but its bland and well-bred features betray no memories. It beckons you with grace, but with no invitation of sentiment. But bring history to it, and it is alive and glows.

To-day Queen Wilhelmina is in her palace, amid the accumulated traditions of her line since Louise de Coligny sat in it three hundred years ago fretting for France. The Second Chamber meets in the ancient dancing-hall of the Binnenhof: the First in the hall of the States of Holland and Friesland: the *Raad van State* in their dining-room. If walls have memories (and why not, since we know they have ears?), what do those of the Binnenhof think when the rumours of the Baker's Law steal up them to join the echoes of *Mare Liberum* or of the Triple Alliance!

Let us look first at the modern legislative machine at work within them.

The two Chambers, which sit together at their opening and closing sessions, are known as the States-General, an ancient name for a modern body. The Provincial States survive, but their powers are almost wholly administrative. Though they elect the members of the Upper House, the political authority they possess in consequence is more apparent than real. The Upper House has greatly less power than the Lower; moreover, the Provincial States are themselves popularly elected, though not, or rather not necessarily, for political ends. The daily administration and execution of business lies with a Standing Committee in each Province, over which a Commissary of the Queen presides. The individuality of the Provinces is fostered in this way, and something—at most, not much—of official gaiety is introduced into their capitals.

The fifty members of the First Chamber are chosen from among the most highly taxed subjects in

each province, the qualification being so fixed that there is an eligible subject for every 3000 of the population. But men occupying, or having occupied, certain high positions in the State can also be elected, although they do not possess the qualification of fortune: thus both estate and worth are represented. The members are chosen for a period of nine years, and every third year one-third retires.

The First Chamber has no rights of initiative or of amendment; it must reject or accept bills as they are sent from the Second Chamber. It can, however, be dissolved. Dr. Kuyper, for example, thwarted in his Higher Education legislation, dissolved it a few years ago, and the country returned him a Conservative one, thus breaking a long tradition of Liberalism in the Senate.

There are one hundred seats in the Second Chamber, each representing an electoral district. The Chamber dissolves every four years. Its members must have reached the age of thirty, and they are allowed fl. 2000 (£166, 13s. 4d.) a year, and travelling expenses, defined with Dutch particularity. Small as Dutch incomes are, this scarcely fosters the professional politician. Ministers, however, receive £1000 a year, with a pension after three years of office: the only cohesive element in Dutch Governments, remarked to me a cynical Hollander. I did not believe him. There is no Speaker. Both Chambers meet under the direction of a President nominated by the Queen.

Briefly, the routine of Government business is this: A legislative measure is laid before a Committee in each Chamber, and the Government answers their reports. The Bill is in all cases submitted first to the Second Chamber, the Minister in charge of it being present to defend it. After the various interpolations

the Chamber passes a Motion of Order, embodying its clear opinion. If the measure is vital, or causes strong party feeling, the Opposition may move a vote of No Confidence, or the Ministerial following move one of Confidence; either may lead to the resignation of the Government. Having passed the Second Chamber, the Bill is introduced and defended by the Minister in the First; confirmed there, it receives the Royal assent. But previously to being introduced at all, each Government measure is examined by the *Raad van State*; and private bills also are considered by this Council before becoming law.

The *Raad van State* has existed in Holland for centuries. The Queen is its President (the Prince Consort, however, representing her at its sittings); and there are fourteen members, with a vice-President. Its important function is the exercise of the Royal prerogative in certain cases foreseen in the Constitution; but the Sovereign's right of dissolving Parliament does not pass into its hands. A division of the Council, known as "Contenticus," advises the Sovereign on contentious measures submitted to him; to this extent, therefore, the *Raad* possesses judicial powers. In reality it does not interfere directly with the government of the country, since in practice Ministers pay just so much attention to its deliberations as they think useful.

The true government thus lies with the body of responsible Ministers, nine in number, all equal, and each independent in his own department. Though their selection rests with the Sovereign, Cabinets are almost always Parliamentary, not Royal. With a few exceptions, Ministers are chosen in accordance with professional fitness: the Minister of War, that is to say, from the Army, the Foreign Minister from the Diplo-

matists, while the Minister of the Waterstaat is an engineer. As the Chambers do not always contain suitable men, such are sometimes found outside the legislature, and they need not seek election to either ; nor, of course, need a member of either stand for re-election on receiving a portfolio. All Ministers, however, have the right to sit in both Chambers ; indeed, as they introduce and defend Government measures, the Chambers have a claim upon their attendance. The Prime Minister, as a rule, is a member of the Second Chamber, but the Premiership carries less authority than at home. The number of parties weakens the Cabinet homogeneity, though there is generally a clear issue determining a Parliamentary crisis.

The Ministers advise the Sovereign, whose person is inviolable ; and Sovereign and Ministers constantly consult together, although the Constitution makes no provision for their doing so. The Royal prerogative is great. Supply, however, is voted by the representatives, and if the Sovereign exercises his right to dissolve Parliament, new Chambers must be formed within forty days.

The right to vote for a member of the Second Chamber is possessed practically by every Netherlander of twenty-five years who contributes to the State Capital or Income tax ; or to the Communal tax for the use of a house ; or who pays a certain weekly rental (it varies from 1s. 4d. minimum to 4s. 2d. maximum, according to local situation or advantage) ; or rents a boat of a certain capacity ; or earns an annual salary or income (the limits of which also vary between £18, 15s. and £29, 3s. 4d.) ; or has been for a certain period in the same employment ; or possesses fl. 100 in Consols or fl. 50 in a Savings Bank ; or holds certain certificates and diplomas. The qualifications are almost identical



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for Parliamentary, Provincial, and Communal elections. A voter at the last, however, need not be over twenty-three years of age. Holland is the only country of Europe where the legal minority endures until the twenty-third birthday.

So much for the system. We turn next to look at some active agencies within it creating the unique situation adumbrated in the preceding chapters.

After 1830, the year of Revolution, in which Belgium separated from Holland, there followed the breeding season of modern Dutch Liberalism. In the Constitution of 1815 had been embodied three great principles: freedom of religion, equality before the Law, and the independence of the Judicial power. The States-General, however, as yet were chosen upon a narrow suffrage; their powers were small, and the principle of the responsibility of Ministers was not recognised. Budgets had not long been submitted to the Chambers, and even now were discussed and revised every ten years only. It was not until 1841 that they were made biennial; nor did they then contain reference to the Colonies, which the Constitution expressly designated to be, for legislative and administrative control, the possession of the Sovereign.

But now the natural development of Liberal principles proceeded. A Liberal parliamentary opposition had been steadily growing, and it only reflected a growth of opinion in the country which could not be resisted. There was a partial revision of the Constitution in 1840, and then there came that of 1848, with which began the real government by the people and the history of modern Holland.

Dutch Liberalism, the domination and triumphs of which are the political history of Holland during the

subsequent half-century, was the Liberalism of the mid-nineteenth century everywhere, with a specially intellectual cast. Its banners were freedom, development, tolerance, and these it kept flying in a specially rarefied air. Even the aloof standard of *laissez-faire* seemed planted in unusual chill and inaccessible heights. As an object of admiring contemplation, at least, the party had the advantage of not only great prestige and learning among its own members, but also an opposition worthy of itself in character and a certain noble address. If in any sense burgher and patrician were here opposed—and the fall of the aristocracy and the rise of the *bourgeoisie* was signalled in the earlier fights—both appear with a senatorial dignity: Thorbecke and Groen van Prinsteren and Opzoomer assume in their writings the heroic figure. There were giants in the political arena in those days, whose debates (on the bitter question of the “neutral” school) were praised by Matthew Arnold as exceeding in knowledge, intelligence, and moderation those of any parliamentary assembly in the world.

Their battle-ground might be said to be that saying of Thomas of Kempen that all reason and natural research ought to follow faith; but the fight was only on the order of their going, and not necessarily at any rate in derogation of either the freedom of knowledge or the wisdom of babes and sucklings. To neither the Liberals nor the Antirevolutionnaires of the fifties, glowing as their convictions were, would have appeared tolerable the emotional humanitarianism which has been adopted by the successors of both in our day. Both, though in different ways, were convinced of the power of knowledge. The Calvinists, no less than their opponents, believed that “a thinking man is the worst enemy the Prince of Darkness can have”; and implicitly at least, if not so

arrogantly, they joined in the Liberal challenge that the unthinking part of the nation ought not to give its tone. Both perhaps were by temperament a little withdrawn from the political arena, where nevertheless they refought effectively battles already joined in the intellectual sphere. Both, as they deserved, won victories in that higher sphere which, in the eyes of the admiring spectators at least, compensate for the defeats both suffered in the lower.

The defeats of both in the lower are obvious enough. Groen van Prinsteren withdrew discomfited into private life when the Act of 1857 confirmed the "neutral" and, as he conceived it, irreligious school; and one wonders whether it would have comforted him in that retirement to have foreseen the triumphs of Dr. Kuyper later in his cast armour. And if the Liberals were the victors in 1857, a defeat more striking, because they could not but acquiesce in it, awaited them in the recognition of the "free" school thirty years later. Their intellectual victories cannot be thus sharply defined. Yet one can scarcely be wrong in ascribing to the impression of that generation of political thinkers and parliamentary fighters of whom we have been speaking, an element still very marked in Dutch life to-day, which realises the best qualities of a citizen society, and leaves comparatively little to regret in the way of aristocratic qualities that are wanting.

If we follow now, ever so briefly, the history of parties in the Binnenhof, it is not merely to compose a chapter on local politics. Even in the often trivial and ludicrous appearances of the later contest, there appear the gravest problems of all nations, presented in a condition of purity, or if anyone likes, of rawness, which makes the Dutch way of dealing with them unique.

In Calvinist Holland, dissent has been towards a

stricter orthodoxy under pressure of the fear of liberal thought. The Liberals in politics were neither professedly nor in reality subverters of religion. The spirit of the old Liberalism of Holland, indeed, was always more English than French. Its ideals were those of Cobden and the young Gladstone rather than of the French Republicans of 1848. Under its domination, English capital built Dutch railways, English manufactures were sought by Dutch importers, and Holland reflected with particular acuteness the Continental Anglomania of the fifties and sixties. But undoubtedly at the same time old Dutch Liberals moved in an atmosphere of doubt. The party which opposed them was, to begin with, conservative in all things, but especially in the ideal of a society acknowledging in every aspect of it the principle of the sovereignty of God.

Liberation of the Roman Catholics ranged Liberalism, with Roman Catholic support, against a Conservative opposition reinforced by the whole weight of militant Protestantism; and it was in this array that was fought the first phase of the battle after it shifted to the ground of the "neutral" school.

There followed next a running fight over denominational education, which developed fresh combinations of forces and ended in a deceptive truce in 1889, when a new Education Act established the right of Protestant "Bible Schools" and the "Catholic Schools" of the Romanists to receive Government subsidies.

In the meanwhile, however, the question had opened wider, and there had been in preparation a new situation. On the one hand there was a great extension towards the Left among the Liberals, under influences such as the history of politics in any country during this period enables us to imagine. Factory legislation, the insurance of workmen against accidents, forecasts of the Children's

Act, showed the new tendencies in the party. Universal Suffrage, disrupting the powerful Liberal Union, became another question of stumbling in the way of harmonious advance. The appearance of an active Social Democrat party in the Chamber complicated political distributions, inasmuch as it discovered an urgent terror for timid electors, and disturbed the issue.

In this way there have been developed the parties of the Left in the present Chamber: the Liberal Union, led by Mr. Goeman Borgesius; the Liberal Democrats, by Mr. Drucker; and the Free Liberals, by Mr. Tydemann. The Liberal Union is the strongest, because, without formulating a programme, yet declaring for extensive administrative reforms, it represents all the shades of Liberalism in the country except the Radicals, who return Mr. Drucker's following, and the most moderate who support Mr. Tydemann in an older individualism.

All the elements of Liberalism, from the remnants of the old Whiggery to a Radicalism that only stops short of Socialism, are found in this opposition, which has the general support of the Parliamentary Socialists under Mr. Troelstra. It is not its composition, however, for that shows no more than local variations upon the Liberal parties in many countries, but it is the composition of the Right, which is extraordinary. In it are united all the forces of conservatism; for this strange coalition of Roman Catholics and high-Calvinists can usually count upon the votes of the Christian Historic Party, aristocratic and above all Protestant, which hates the conjunction, but fears Socialism more.

The Government is therefore clerical, and on that account is detested by all who openly regard clericism with a bitterness as profound as that which flows in covered depths between the present allies of Rome and Geneva. It is in following the fortunes of the party of

the Right, then, that I will complete this broad sketch of recent Dutch politics. They are bound up in the remarkable figure of Dr. Abraham Kuyper. Dr. Kuyper is the spokesman of an extreme Calvinist sect, an Orthodox professor of Theology, a parliamentarian who practises the arts of popular oratory, and a great journalist with an instinct for organisation and *réclame*. A fanatic and a priest, he yet knows how to reconcile conviction with a skill in tactics which his enemies declare is unscrupulous. The detestation in which they hold him, even more than the domination he exercises over his followers, is the measure of his power. One cannot imagine a combination of talents less in accordance than his with the traditions of the ruling class in Holland, but what it lacks in authority it makes up for by the qualities of strangeness and surprise. He fascinates even when he repels. His is the only name of a public man that the stranger hears on every mouth. Even now, when he is eclipsed, only his age makes it doubtful whether he could again emerge to take up the leadership; and there are some who believe that he may yet be called upon to draw the sting from a coalition which his own hand fashioned, though Mr. Heemskerk now leads it.

The student of Dutch politics first meets Dr. Kuyper's name in the debates of the late sixties concerning grants-in-aid to non-State schools. With the eye of a great leader he saw the excellence of denominational education as a rallying-ground for the diverse forces opposed to the ruling Liberalism, in the Church and the State. He founded the *Standaard* (which he still edits in its fortieth year) as the Antirevolutionnair organ of the Netherlands. The name had already attached to the earlier Opposition—"the Gospel against the Revolution" was Groen van Prinsteren's watchword—and with the name Dr. Kuyper

adopted the principles also. They were, in a word, condemnation of the free thought introduced with the French Revolution, and a return to the ideal of Holland in her golden age, God the source of sovereign power, so that in politics as in all things His Word is acknowledged.

To recreate of modern Holland a theocracy was the programme declared by Dr. Kuyper for the party in 1878. The Reformed Church was not to be again established, neither was it to be regarded as opposed to the State, but both were to work together, united yet independent, for the same end. The education of children was to lie with their parents, whose duty it is. The power of the people was not to be considered as a natural right, for like that of princes and governors it is held from Providence. The application of these principles to current politics, while it countered pet theories of the Liberals, won the favour of the Conservatives through a claim to historic sanction. The patriarchal ideal of certain sections of the country was sustained by the doctrine of the sovereignty of each within his own sphere, and therefore of the autonomy of the local governments and of the electoral right residing in the heads of families. An inclination towards Protection attracted the agricultural classes, then beginning to feel the depression in their industry. The programme, in a word, had many allurements in detail for Dutch men of various shades of political opinion, and above all it united religious sentiments, alarmed and shocked by a great freedom of thought, through its acknowledgment of the authority of Holy Scripture, and the claim that it must rule through the consciences of governments.

And here I may note still another element in the political situation which may not have been without its influence in strengthening the Clerical forces. There are more Jews in proportion to the population in Holland

than in any other country in Europe which may be called self-governing. In it alone are they numerous enough to count politically in the mass, and their whole weight is cast in the anti-Clerical scale. There is no Jewish question in Holland, as in militarist Germany and in Russia. The Jews, and particularly the poor Jews, are almost blatantly Orange. But in the minds of that class especially, which is the stronghold of Anti-revolutionnair prejudice, Liberalism is often identified with Jew lawyers "on the make" and Jew traders who are interested in keeping up the Free Trade system. This may have inclined many wavering voters towards the Clerical camp.

The forces thus rallied were cleverly organised as a political body. It had district associations, Provincial committees, and a general assembly, somewhat after the manner of the religious bodies, and with an almost religious fervour inspiring its activities. There was one section, aristocratic and Protestant, powerfully led by Mr. de Savornin Lohman, and carrying on the Conservative tradition, which had no love for Dr. Kuyper and all his ways; but even it placed the conception of God in the Government of the country in the foreground, and only added "in a Protestant sense" to qualify the "Christian State" which was the primary ideal of all. This section "with the double-barrelled names," as he called it, Dr. Kuyper treated with a disconsideration that has since been revenged. His strength lay with the *bourgeoisie*, the *kleine luyden*, the "little people," dumb classes in a practical oligarchy, to whom he gave spirit and a voice. That was the inestimable service he rendered them, and they have repaid it by their faithfulness to his powerful personality.

The Roman Catholics, the other party to the Coalition, had given the Liberals notable support in the

fifties, during the Protestant fever over their emancipation, and they continued it for a time on the question of the "neutral" school. But that was from policy, not from principle. Both policy and principle, on the other hand, seemed at least to countenance alliance with the Antirevolutionnaires, fierce as their essential antagonism was. Whether in winning freedom for their education or in routing the accursed thing Modernity, or simply in tasting the fruits of power which is the reward of parties, there lay in a junction of forces a hope which must be renounced if they kept apart. Each had organisation, cohesion, a steady aim, and the quickening of a spirit that feels its enlargement; and led by Dr. Schæpman, the Roman Catholics knew something of the spell of personality, which had worked a miracle upon their allies. Together they were to have numbers at the polls, which only the solidarity of their opponents could resist.

Among the Liberals, on the other hand, there was no solidarity. Their diverse opinions, the latest parliamentary groupings of which I have already indicated, might consent to be harmonised on the eve of elections, in an effort against Clericism and the threat of Protection; but essential differences of principles remained which could not long be composed. There were innumerable differences also on matters that were not essential. These at least might have been settled, one way or another, and some matters of high principle also, over the issue of one daring advance; but with characteristic Dutch caution new ground was taken step by step, each an occasion for sectional bickerings. The Franchise Act of 1897, though it doubled the electorate, was still a compromise, and universal suffrage is still a bone of contention among the various members of the Left. And on the new franchise, it was the Clericals who won

at the polls. It was the Antirevolutionnair party, and not Labour, which showed increased strength.

The Liberal party was doomed to defeat, though it moved towards it slowly. It went down, indeed, flying Radical colours, and it is not to be wondered at that the Liberal ministry (1897-1901) which made education compulsory, and passed the Dwellings Act, and the Health Act, and the Workman's Accident law, brought its followers to the polls more disrupted than ever.

It will now be seen what I mean by saying that the stream of politics in Holland has burst its dikes and become lost in a morass. This flying survey of its rather tiresome wanderings would not have been warranted merely to interpret that figure by tracing the degeneracy of Dutch parliamentary parties. These have long ceased to have any interest or importance in themselves for the foreign observer, and, as far as he can see, for large sections of the natives as well. As often as not he hears the business of the Binnenhof dismissed with impatience or contempt. Interest in politics frequently takes the voters in large numbers to the polls, but it does not appear to carry them farther. Through some weakness in its constitution, which removes representatives from vital contact with the constituencies, or the lack of great figures, or a pettifogging handling of principles, resulting in trivial divisions and the consequent opportunism of leaders, who nevertheless seem to have followings only because of an excessive resolute faithfulness to some unessential shade of principle,—however it is to be accounted for, the representative system seems to fail in the respect of the country, and it lacks any pomp and circumstance to sustain its prestige during periods of depressed authority.

Yet one can regard the Legislature as a kind of

gramophone, without inspiration of its own, which at the same time gives the force of enactment to voices that speak through it. The tactics and compromises of the Chamber, often petty and ludicrous, and still more often futile, are the signals of extremely interesting and significant stresses in the country outside it.

Whether or not I am right in thinking that Holland is at this moment on a wave of prosperity, she is at least on a wave of enterprise: enterprise in business and enterprise in setting her house in order. New forces are coming into play in consequence. Agriculture and industry are investing themselves with a new political authority; and it remains to be seen how they will exert it when the Government, if they escape shipwreck over their expenditure on defences, introduce their promised measure of Protection. The question of taxation is urgent. Between Capital and Labour a battle has still to be fought, and there are larger questions looming in the development of the Indies than the playing of Sunday bands on the Waterloo Plein.

The observer seems to notice signs already that these practical interests will consolidate moderate counsels in the country, too long silent in the Binnenhof, and relieve the political strife of its religious bitterness. This is the amelioration of the situation to which the hopeful looks. If it strikes the observer at the same time that the waters of disillusionment have gone over certain sections of the nation, that can easily, I think, be explained. Liberalism, as we have seen, has suffered a defeat, and Dutch Liberalism was a great intellectual effort. It has, again, left behind it a legacy of Rationalism, and Rationalism has proved itself an ungrateful philosophy in a world constituted like this one we know. Bred on the somewhat arid doctrines of both, yet having developed the enlarged sentiment or conscience of their

time, a new generation, or it were better said, the finer spirits of a new generation, face Clericism and Socialism, and know not very well what to make of them. The whole country is a little in amaze before them; and touching the attitude of the Protestant part of it there are two impressions that I shall venture to record. The first is, that while many have fled Socialism as the devil, and have sought the deep sea of an alliance with Rome, a great many others, in all classes, are at the point of being almost inclined to embrace it. And the second impression is, that many of the dominant class, for whom the besetting danger was the pride of knowledge, have been chastened into the recognition of an undeniable force behind the incredible banners of the Calvinists.

CHAPTER XXIV

SHADES OF THE RAPENBURG

THE Englishman, and still more the Scot, ought to walk into Leyden with a great feeling of friendliness. The Rapenburg, the Breestraat, the Lange Brug—to find ourselves in them is like paying a visit to the village among the hills from which our forebears sprang. It satisfies a homing sense in us.

For I am supposing that we are travellers with a little imagination, who have appropriated for ancestors our countrymen that lived in Leyden in centuries back, a shining lineage by adoption. Soldiers of fortune, newly arrived in it from the packet at Brielle or Helvoetsluis, and already fingering their sword-belts while they listened for the bugle-call wafted over Rynland from foreign fields. Migrant pilgrims of faith, who lighted here to rest in the storm a while before spreading wings for flight across the Atlantic. Scholars—what company of adventurers will compare with that enrolled in the “*Album Studiosorum Academiæ Lugduni Bataviæ*”: many hundreds of English-speaking graduates of Leyden, all young, all ardent, aglow with ambition and hope? A mile or two away at the Hague, in those centuries, political exiles of the same kin ate their hearts out in hopeless longing under smiles and posturings on the Voorhout; broken men and disillusioned, most of them, playing a game—a game of deception often which they

played with themselves. But here in Leyden were the fresh hearts of the same generations, their only intrigue as yet with knowledge, their spirits soaring, taking a short breath in this garden of learning by the Old Rhine before starting forth upon a world they were sure was all at their feet.

As a Scot I read the Scots names in that quarto, a thousand of them more or less, with a tightening at the throat. What a sum of national aspiration they represent!—and who would be so churlish as to remark how few are known to the fame which all so confidently sought!

We do well to establish some such mood before paying our visit, for the town will scarcely stimulate one in us of itself. Not that Leyden is dead, like "*Bruges la morte*." I choose to think of her, retired among her polders, as an ancient dame of spirit, who has withdrawn from the vulgarity of modern traffic. It is true that all do not interpret her isolation in so flattering a figure. A gentleman from Cowdenbeath (which he assures me is a growing place) with whom I chanced to travel from Amsterdam last summer, confided in me that "*Leyden was a backwater*." She had "*got left*," he said; and how shall I dispute his verdict when the natives themselves are so eager to confirm it? If you happen to express in their hearing your love for their city and pleasure in dwelling in it, they shoot a look at you out of their eyes as if they suspected a jest; nor, when they are assured of your sincerity, do they appear gratified by this bestowal of your affection. It is not a great compliment to their town, they seem to say, that it wins the favour of so indiscriminating and eccentric a traveller. I have met none of them who might not frankly tell you that when they love her best is when they are away from her.

The Leydeners, in a word, exhibit the truth that we

never know our mercies. There is their single horse-tram, for example, that jogs you through the town from the station to Hoogewoerd. It stops on this side of each bridge to let the picturesque barge glide through. It gets itself involved in every interesting crowd in the Nobelstraat, exchanges salutes with the waiter of De Harmonie, and takes the Breestraat at a pace that allows you to enjoy at leisure the architectural beauties of the Gemeentlandshuis and the Stadhuis. It would halt for you, there is no doubt, if you wished to hear the silver chimes under the broach-tower itself. How incomparable is a conveyance such as this! Yet I have acquaintances in Leyden who are growing morose at the thought of Utrecht's new electric cars. And the Utrechters, after they were whisked round their beautiful Singel, and even through the noble bosky alley of the Maliebaan, were only restrained from an intolerable upsettingness by the gibes of the Hagenaars at the old horse-express, now departed, which survived for a time to ply a raucous and tortuous course around their Dom.

Big fleas have bigger fleas, and so from *infinitum*. Doubtless, did we live in Leyden, we should feel as Leydeners do. But it is the pleasure of foreign travel that you do not require to outstay your illusions; and unless it is our misfortune to carry about, like my Cowdenbeath acquaintance, too exacting a native standard, we need not suffer on a visit to Leyden the disenchantment of mere rate-payers.

The charm of Leyden, then, is this great repose. Who, that dreams away the day in it now, would imagine that once it was one of the Dutch "towns of traffic," perhaps the first of them, the Manchester of Holland! The guide-books, always flattering to our grosser interests, have invented the story that in the town's hey-day there were a hundred thousand people

living where now there are but fifty. That fiction has no warrant in the bills of mortality. It is a proof of the small importance of mere numbers that the population which then made so great a noise in the world was that of a little country town. But the moralist who comes to Leyden can pick up many an illustration of the vanity of human endeavour for his next sermon. Which of the splendid and dashing figures that shone in the Rapenburg lives to-day beside its lameters and beggars in Rembrandt's etchings! Whose ghosts do we hope to meet in the wynds and closes? A rollicking painter who kept a tavern. An ugly Irish medico spending his last penny upon some bulbs for the uncle in Ireland whose charity he was abusing. A few weavers, a printer, a shoemaker or two, poor puritans from Scrooby. What a mockery of human endeavour—for we can preach a sermon too—in all its conscientious blindness, lies in this reversal of the standards of greatness.

It is the things of the spirit that live. The citizens of Leyden had an instinct for this truth when Orange offered to reward them for their endurance in the siege with a University or exemption from taxation, and, like children of light, they chose the former. For it is the *Academie* that has won fame for Leyden. It is a beacon set higher than her Burg; a delectable mountain of these nether lands. This is the heart through which, for all these centuries, the blood of adolescence has flowed, and to-day, too, it is in the *Academie* that the life of Leyden throbs; so that, in the "Vacantie," when *cubicula locanda* hangs in the windows, and the portals of Minerva are silent, the pulse of the town beats low indeed.

It is with our minds on the past that we must visit Leyden. Here we can "weave illusions incompatible with the bustle of modern occupancy." Not to risk shattering them, let us enter the town from the side of

the Hague by tram or by boat. Over this road, by the same wagon, perhaps, that carried Evelyn ten years later, runaway horses (if Houbraken may be believed) brought the young Rembrandt breathless to his parents with the news of his first sale to the connoisseur in the Hague. This was the pilgrim's way for centuries; by *jachtschuit* or by coach along it passed the procession of our countrymen which makes so variegated and affecting a show to our imaginations. It brings us like them to the Witte Gate, and thus plump into a town that, save for the *ramp* of 1807, has changed its aspect little since the Beggars sailed up to its wall in boats.

Holding straight on, within the old ramparts, we will turn into the Weddesteeg, where Rembrandt was born. There is a kind of cellar in the lane, used as a stable or coach-house; on the walls can still be seen a few Dutch tiles, all the trace that remains of the miller's household except its imperishable appearance in the plates and canvases of his immortal son.

Was ever so ordinary a family rendered so extraordinary? Herman the miller, dragged unwillingly it may be from his malt sacks, and decked out in furs or corselet to give practice to the 'prentice painter. The mother is caught over her Bible; her eyes of inward contemplation are wells of mystery in that face of wise, arid, worldly sense. Lysbeth, with the delicate peach-bloom on her cheek, and a blunt matronliness of feature and figure, hands the child into the arms of the aged Simeon. The shoemaker Adriaan, dumb model of the grief and weariness of the humble, brother flesh and bone of their great interpreter. Struck in their golden moments, as on an imperishable medal, these burgher folk in the Weddesteeg.

But other ghosts await us in the town. We start them at every turn. A whole pilgrim colony of them

flit past the shadows of Gravenstein towards John Robinson's house at the Pieter's Kerk, across the Rapenburg, into which we have just passed. Here was the St. Barbara's Cloister, the first University building, and a little later known as the Princesenhof, because of its royal occupants. Mary of Medicis and Queen Henrietta Maria, and her daughter Mary, William II's wife, all visited this inn: Mary's son, our William III, spent three years of his strange austere boyhood here, already reflecting gravely on the duties of Princes which sat so lightly on his cousins of Bohemia. They, also, were all educated in this house; boys and girls streaked like their mother with genius, an unhappy portion for the children of kings. If you have read the memoirs of one of them, Sophia, their restless, reckless spirits will haunt this corner for you; and you will see their mother too, Elizabeth Stuart, receiving with a mocking gravity (if she be not too bored) the bowing magistrates and *poorters* at the inn-gates.

Now we walk down the canal, under the shadowing limes: where better can Sir Thomas Browne have found the "leisurable hours" in which to revolve the noble periods of the "Religio Medici"? And there, in decayed relics of the sky-blue shalloon and white allapeen and the superfine small hat that have shared his adventures since he bought them in Edinburgh, is Oliver Goldsmith. He has just come from Madame Diallon's (wherever she resided), after writing home a description of the "well-clothed vegetable," the Dutchman of his day, and the pleasing creature, the object of his appetite, who wears a large fur cap with a deal of Flanders lace—what an eye he has for finery—and puts on two petticoats for every one of the nine pair of breeches that her lover carried.

As he steps across the *Academie* forecourt into the Hortus (whither let us follow him), he is thinking how

the great Monro, whose class he has lately left, had often entered here; the physician who was drawing students from all parts of the world, even from Russia, to Edinburgh, founding a school of medicine there that would by and bye rob Leyden of her pre-eminence. In this Physick Garden the ghosts crowd thickly; here are its founder, Dirk Kluit, and Clusius, greatest botanist of his century, on whose tomb it is wittily written—

“Since no more herbs the earth to Clusius yields,
New ones he seeks in the Elysian fields;”

and Boerhave, and our own Dr. Archibald Pitcairne, in whose lecture-room in the adjoining *Academie* the incomparable one himself had sat; William Pitcairn, Brocklesby, Mead, Monro himself, Gregory, Askew, scarce a physician of note in the eighteenth century but is here.

As we retrace our steps, after quitting this company, the gate of the *Academie* is filled with the fine figure of a man, a demigod, with “shrewd, clever carle” written boldly on his front of Jove, as Sir Walter wrote it on his memory. It is the minister of Inveresk to be. He lodges on the Lange Brug, with one Mademoiselle Vandertasse, “plump and in good condition,” upon whose lively confidences to the handsome Scot he polishes his French. What a garrulous and caustic shade it is! We must have him take us to the Frenchwoman’s house, in high repute for the best coffee, to be introduced there to his fellow-lodgers, and discuss with them the news of the Rebellion, and then round the rooms of the other British students; Charles Townshend and Doddeswell among them, Chancellors of the Exchequer in the making, and John Wilkes, if he has not betaken himself and his ugly, notable face to visit Immateriality Baxter in Utrecht.

He is acquainted with half the Dutchmen too, and can tell which misuse the Dutch student’s freedom, and

the houses where the dull lectures are delivered that they are at liberty to avoid. You will know Leyden better than a Leydener when he has taken you about the town and carried you with him for a walk round the Singel. And here he shall be our cicerone in the *Academie* building on whose threshold he has held us with his gossip, which Scaliger and Lipsius, Boerhave, Albinus, Gronovius, and the later names of Kuenen and Lorentz make honourable. Up these classic steps, Mr. Carlyle: we follow. . . .

To commemorate the siege of Leyden, Holland erected this University. To commemorate the Peace, she drained the Beemster lake. And still the Waterstaat and Education are the great facts in Dutch life,—or shall we say, the Waterstaat, Education, and Calvinism? Institutions change at the pressure of modern needs; and sometimes, it seems, on the demand of ancient revivals. But at their heart they have in keeping the old ideals.

Here in the *Academie* on the Rapenburg is surely the heart of Dutch Education. Reviewing it from here, shall we not be in touch with a tradition that still inspires it?

CHAPTER XXV

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL BOY

THE Dutch infant enters public life at the ripe age of seven. The mysteries of his nursery before that are discreetly related in their proper place. At seven, the State takes hold of him for instruction in "all social and Christian virtues." Yet even before that he may have been the object of public concern, for if he is sent to a *bewaarschool*, or kindergarten, that school and its equipment, if not actually the instruction given in it, will have been inspected and approved by the communal authorities. Their powers are great. I think I am right in saying that they even safeguard him from a false start by discouraging the teaching of reading and writing in the *bewaarschool*. And thus it is true of even the infant in Holland that he is protected from falling for his education into unsanctified hands.

These Infant Schools exist mainly through private initiative, partly disinterested, partly sectarian, which in a comparatively short time has helped to establish them in quite half the communes in the country. They relieve tired mothers and overtasked households of some 140,000 children between three and six. Being unorganised, they vary in efficiency. One sometimes hears that in staffing and health conditions they leave much to be desired. I have never been inside one, but have often watched their methods out of doors, in the streets and

squares in summer, and, seeking myself the shady side from which to be an observer, have admired the gusto with which both children and teachers perspired at the study of "Ring-a-ring-of-Roses" and the like.

Is it, perhaps, to these exercises that is due a change that has come over Amsterdam streets? One day last June, in the always lively Leidsche Kade, I saw a company of ragged little street girls dancing to the beat of a barrel-organ with a precision and art and merry rhythm of rags that left Drury Lane not a two-step behind. So far as I can remember, that is something new for Holland.

The *bewaarschool* is now so important an institution that one may expect it soon to receive more official recognition. So far, however, the State regards the age of six as the beginning of the career of instruction, under a strictly certificated and supervised teaching staff.

This barring-out of the untrained, or at least the uncertificated teacher, is the corner-stone of the Dutch educational system, and it is laid with characteristic precision and thoroughness. No one is allowed to teach in any school who is not able to satisfy, and continue to satisfy, the appointed examiners as to his or her equipment and morals. You cannot open an adventure school unless you hold a head-teacher's certificate. Those who had opened them previously to 1878, when that regulation was introduced, had to pass the new examination demanded by the Education Act of that year. Teachers cannot be employed in adventure schools who have not passed the examinations demanded of teachers in the State schools.

Neither in one school nor in another are the unqualified allowed to teach. You may not give instruction in any language unless you have passed a special examination in that language; and this applies



OLD DUTCH CHILD'S CHAIR
FROM THE PAINTING BY JOSEF ISRAELS

even to those to whom that language is native. When English, French, or German girls, say, teach in Dutch schools, they can do so as assistant teachers without a certificate up to the age of nineteen; but after that they must have qualified by passing precisely the same examination in the language they profess (which in most cases, of course, is their own language) as native teachers in the higher-burgher schools; and even then they must have the Royal sanction.

Mr. J. C. Medd, whose report to the Board of Education on Education in the Netherlands was an excellent review of the field as it was ten years ago,—he caught it just as it was beginning to show the new harvest,—mentions, with a note of amusement, having seen the authorisation by the Queen Regent to an Oxford graduate to teach English at the private school at Voorschoten. Foreign teachers over nineteen are comparatively few in consequence.

We are now ready to follow the newly breeched Dutchman to his primary school, public or denominational, or adventure, but always State-supervised, which he is compelled to enter at the age of seven. During the next six years he is grounded in reading, writing, arithmetic, the elements of his own language and history, the elements of geography, nature-study, singing, drawing, and gymnastic exercises or drill. The last, though, like the others, it is compulsory, in many schools was tacitly dropped owing to a popular opposition to it, which may have had some special reason beyond the Dutch dislike of militarism, and indeed of discipline, which I have not discovered. A new ideal of education is changing that. I saw a class in gymnastic drill carried out with great spirit by both boys and master in a school in a poor quarter of Amsterdam; and the reaction towards a greater attention to physical education,

which has been very marked in the last few years among the educated classes in Holland, is undoubtedly showing in the humbler also.

While the State lays down a cursus and strictly supervises instruction for the primary schools, it at the same time gives the local authority a considerable discretion. It is, of course, in higher-grade schools and in optional subjects that this discretion is exercised. For the child's elementary instruction in the public schools, the parent is charged a minimum fee of fourpence a week (which is remitted if he is too poor to pay), and there are many grades of schools in which the same compulsory subjects are taught, but at higher charges. The Dutch have not yielded to the doctrine that if you force the child to be put to school you must pay his fees. Education in Holland is compulsory, but it is not free. At the same time, it is brought within the range of all. A uniform instruction, in fact, is compulsory, and charged for, but is made no hardship. That, at any rate, is the ideal. At the same time, something beyond this uniform instruction is offered for such as can pay, and as show an aptitude for it.

In the higher-grade schools, and in many lower-grade also—wherever, in fact, there is a demand for it, the law compels its supply—there is teaching in optional subjects: elementary French, German, and English, general history, mathematics, drawing, and gymnastics. Of the discretionary powers left to the local authority, I will content myself with one example. It illustrates also the ideal of the Amsterdam regulations, to give to every boy who can take advantage of it an opportunity of learning a foreign language. In the ordinary course of primary instruction (*gewoon lager onderwijs*) no foreign language is included; at the same time, in Amsterdam, selected pupils are afforded special

instruction in the evening, during the last two years of the cursus, in French, German, and English, at choice; and I may add that most choose English, because they aim at entering offices where that language will be of most use to them. But there are some, at any rate, who take French in order to qualify for entrance to the higher-burgher schools, for which (as we are to see) some knowledge of French is generally demanded. This special evening teaching during two years is supplemented, for such as pass the examination at the end of them, by two years' continuation instruction in languages by day; which also is so arranged, as regards the course of study, as to extend the opportunity to those who may not have taken the earlier evening classes.

In the extended course of primary instruction (*meer uitgebreid lager onderwijs*; hence those schools are known as MULO), on the other hand, French is a compulsory subject.

The latest development of the Amsterdam effort in the teaching of languages is its concentration in a special school, with a three years' course in two foreign tongues.

I desire as far as possible to keep out of this summary account of education in Holland the mention of the religious strife which has torn the country for more than a generation. The reader knows the general outline of its history from earlier chapters. But I should not be justified in leaving unrecorded an opinion I have often met, that the education in the public school, so far as relates to the instruction determined by law, is, on the average, more efficient than that of the private schools of all kinds. As a matter of fact, this question cannot well be discussed in Holland without prejudice. These private schools, efficient or inefficient as may be, are on the increase, and are attended by an increasing number of children. The

latest figures I have seen are for 1908. According to them, there were in that year 3274 public schools (an increase in twelve months of 8), and 1885 private schools (an increase in the same period of 108); the public schools were attended by 563,187 scholars, as against 564,445 in 1907, and the private schools by 316,088, as against 302,305. So far as they are comparative, I should regard these statistics as conveying information in respect of the politics, rather than of the education, of the country. The opinion I have quoted above is possibly one which prejudice prolongs after it has ceased to be justified. Private schools doubtless were inferior, but now that they have become State-aided, and subject to increased State supervision, they are, one would suppose, improved.

But there is still another aspect of the matter which I must glance at before passing on. It has been represented to me frequently that many teachers in the elementary public schools have a baneful influence. The Teacher's Bond, in this view, is a powerful agency for stirring up class hatred, and some of its members are Socialists of an aggressive type, exhibiting a violent partisan spirit, which as much as anything also explains the rise and flourishing of the "Schools with the Bible." I am not here reciting the opinion of the Antirevolutionnaires alone, but that also of several anti-Clericals, who supported it to me by specific instances of intolerable abuse of the teachers' position.

There is much light thrown upon education proper by the figures that relate to the enforcement of the compulsory principle. Briefly, the law compels regular attendance at a primary school, or qualified instruction at home, from the age of seven onwards for six years, or until the six classes of the cursus have been passed. The parent who fails to carry out this provision is visited by

the inspector, and is next called before the Commission for Prevention of School Neglect. Should the child fail to attend a school within fourteen days thereafter, the inspector enrolls his name in one or other school, and failure to present the child there, and keep him there in regular attendance, results in the parent being charged before the Canton-judge. I need not go into the various penalties inflicted for neglect; they rise at a fourth conviction to a fine of 25s., and at a fifth to one of £4, 3s. 4d., and ultimately to imprisonment for seven days. These regulations, with their penalties, apply equally to parents who elect to have their child educated at home. The Commissions which I have mentioned above are to be found in all communes. They number nine members, elected by the communal council from among parents and guardians, school teachers, and, indeed, all inhabitants who have attained their majority. To this compulsory attendance at school, however, there are exceptions. One great obstacle to it has always been the demand for child labour in a country so greatly given up to agricultural pursuits and to life on rivers and canals. Another lies in the fact that many Dutch families live in comparative isolation. The last condition is disappearing with the rapid reclamation of the moors and fen-lands of the east; while reduction of the number of children who live on ship-board is proceeding, at any rate on the Rhine, with that of the skipper-owned Rhine boats under the pressure of competition from the "office" (or company-owned) barges. The difficulty in educating these Rhine-boat children is increased by their speech being a mixture of Dutch and German.

The waterways of Holland are crowded with small craft, here to-day and away to-morrow, never in any haven for long, but carrying merchandise between far-distant places inland; and on these vessels whole families live

from year's end to year's end. The boats are their only homes.

Watch any of them enter a canal after a voyage. They had come from far away up the Rhine, and one would have thought that once they were again within a Dutch canal the family on board would feel like sailors arrived in port. But no, river or canal is all the same to them. Where their boat is, there they are at home. The skippers are not yet done manœuvring into the locks when buckets are let down, and the women, without one curious glance at the people on the quay, are busy scrubbing and polishing as if they lived anchored for ever in a cottage in the polders.


I once committed myself to the opinion that there is nothing degrading in that condition of living, and sometimes it justifies the picture I drew of vessels scrupulously clean and neat, "painted like toys, with pots of flowers and cages of song-birds in the cabin windows," like the Dutch ships of another class that made Dysart notable for Mr. R. L. Stevenson. One such I saw at Enkhuizen the other Sunday morning, as trim and self-respecting a craft as civilisation can show. But I should no longer subscribe to an idyllic view of life on canal boats, as you can see it while they crawl from town to town; the lad on the bank straining himself at the long rope from the masthead, or urging the canal horse to the same work; his elder brother laboriously poling, while a sail is rigged to catch any wind that may be going; the skipper hanging leisurely over the helm, or his wife or daughter taking his place, while he sits "in slippers on the break of the poop smoking the long German pipe"; the stove in the cabin drawing comfortably, the dinner cooking, the children playing about around the cargo. I count it for very little that ladies in Holland have told me that to live such a life on such a canal boat was the

dream of their childhood. One of these ladies has a boy, I know, who has set his ambition on the career of a tram-conductor. To punch anything, even tickets, is a healthy aspiration, which, providentially, fades at the touch of years.

These various impediments in the way of administering the Compulsory Education Act seem, on the whole, to be reasonably met. Residence four or more kilometers from a school exempts the parents from its regulations. In regard to the ship-board population, no provision appears to have been made by the Act; but I believe that it is the practice to enforce attendance of its children at the Navigation School at Rotterdam, or at the schools at other ports of entry—a large phrase for certain Dutch anchorages. This scarcely realises the Dutch ideal of continuous instruction, of which I shall have more to say again, but it is doubtless as effective an arrangement as the peculiar conditions admit.

A more serious difficulty comes from the demand of the workers on the land for their children's labour. It is found impossible to deny their right to it entirely. A grant of temporary exemption for not more than six weeks in the year, the vacation apart, lies with the local inspector, as well as, I believe, with the headmaster, and is permissible for a child who has reached the age of ten, and can show a regular attendance (that is, who for two consecutive months has not been absent on more than two occasions without reasonable excuse) during the preceding six months.

The applicant must prove a good case for the services of the child being required in agriculture, gardening, or the lifting of peat, and the leave may be granted for any time of the year. Those who desire his labour ask for it at the pressing seasons, and in the slack time take care that his attendance is regular. A prudent solution. The



point, of course, is the amount of care with which these exemptions are granted. If the conditions are observed, they clearly argue a regular attendance during the greater part of the year; but I found some difference of opinion about the discretion with which grants of absence are issued.

Such, broadly sketched to suit the limits of this book, is the scheme of Dutch primary instruction.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE SCHOOL IN THE CAREER

HOLLAND'S most important industry is still that of her schools. A whole system of her home interests revolves around "exams." To a Dutchman his career is his education, and the turning-point in it arrives for him early. It is in the choice offered him at the responsible age of thirteen that I can best catch for the reader some flying glimpses of Dutch secondary education.

With his thirteenth year the boy (Jaap will identify him) has achieved the highest standard at the public elementary school. Coming, we will suppose, out of a good family, with traditions of culture and learning, he has been bred to pretensions of being an educated man. The ways now part in front of him. For in the higher-burgher school (*hoogere-burger school*), on the one hand, with its excellent and wide, possibly too wide, instruction in science and modern languages, the historical and literary studies are circumscribed, and the classics are not taught at all. Latin is left to the Latin school or gymnasium, in the time-tables of which modern literatures do not appear, and modern languages occupy very little space. The gymnasium is officially regarded as for higher, not secondary, education; yet it is the alternative to the higher-burgher school. So that if Jaap now decides for the higher-burgher school, he is renouncing the University for a technical or commercial

career. He may rue his choice later on, and cross over to the gymnasium by the paths of private tuition and study, but like all who take a cross-cut he will run a risk of losing his way, and in practice he very seldom does take it.

This has the advantage, common to the whole Dutch educational system, of orderliness and a fixed purpose, but its disadvantages are at least as evident. Thirteen, it is admitted, is too early an age for a decision so momentous and so difficult to revoke; and there is a movement to delay the bifurcation of the courses, and to provide schools of general education (at which presumably Latin would be taught, though it need not be obligatory), carrying the boy forward from the primary schools to fifteen or sixteen, when he is more competent to decide upon a career. It is on this system, I believe, that a recently established *lycée* at the Hague is arranged.

Jaap, however, has decided for himself already. His ambitions are set upon commerce, or a professional or Civil Service post accessible through the polytechnic at Delft, or the Indian or scientific courses at the Universities. He can realise them by way of the higher-burgher school, and so his choice falls on it instead of on the gymnasium. Unless he live in a very remote countryside, he will have no difficulty in finding a school near his own home; in any case, the obstacle must be great which prevents him attending one or other of the seventy or eighty higher-burgher schools distributed throughout the country—State, communal, and private, the last echoing the religious strife. The reason why their number cannot be stated precisely is, that a commercial school here and there is doubtfully possessed of the title; a symptom that the practical instruction in the higher-burgher school is being more and more emphasised.

At thirteen or fourteen, then, Jaap sits the examination for entrance to his new school, French being a compulsory subject. He passes it very well, for his was a primary school with an extended course, and in the weeks since he left it he has been further brushed up privately in the special subjects. The standard set is fairly within the capacity of any boy in his circumstances who enjoys good health as well as a sound intelligence. But there are many failures, and they are more numerous in some schools than in others, owing to the latitude allowed in drawing the regulations. The communes are left much discretion. French is not always compulsory, for example. The fees, too, vary; from £2, 10s. in small and southern towns, to £16 in some city schools, and even more if the parents are *forensen*. And they are often remitted. A custom is growing up, throughout the whole educational system, of making rebates according to income. The variation of standard in the entrance examination and the school course explains why one sometimes finds a boy living and attending the higher-burgher school in a town far off from that in which his family reside. Had Jaap, for example, failed for his present school, he might have been sent to another where entrance is easier, even though that would dislocate family life and harry the family purse.

Thus all over Holland each year there are some hundreds of boys of Jaap's age who are put upon their mettle to pass into the higher-burgher schools of their town, knowing well the disastrous result of failure to themselves and their parents. The consequent anxiety may not be enormous, for such burdens sit lightly on most at thirteen. But the effect of this early impression of the importance of education is not difficult to imagine.

The mill through which Jaap has elected to go, turns him out at the end of five years. In some others the

course is for three years; in others still, for three, with two years of commercial education to follow. I have already indicated the general lines of instruction: Dutch, French, German, English; the sciences; geography, history, book-keeping, drawing, and gymnastics; all (in the large towns, at least) taught in schools that are admirably equipped. In many of them the standard is rigorously enforced. The pupil does not rise from class to class automatically. He is often kept back. I have known cases where he was permitted to make the step only after private tuition in a weak subject during the vacation. From that training Jaap at eighteen, or even earlier, ought to go out to the practical business of life a well-instructed man, and I have no doubt that he will.

It is (nominally at least) through higher-burgher schools that the civil servants, agricultural teachers and advisers, foresters, and others have passed who study at the well-known college of Wageningen, the crown of the Dutch agricultural system of education. Its base may be considered the innumerable winter courses organised throughout the Provinces by the travelling teachers and private societies; while in the intermediate stage come the thirteen winter schools, and special schools and courses in dairying, horticulture, and forestry. To fill in its details is impossible, but they are illustrated in two typical cases of country boys whose lives are to be lived on the land. I mean typical cases of such young working agriculturists as take advantage of educational opportunities; for it is not pretended that the students are numerous. The most enthusiastic do not picture the countryside agape for instruction.

The first lad is the son of a fairly successful boer. He, like Jaap, passed the six classes of the primary school at thirteen, after which he joined his father on the farm. During the next three years he attended

the evening continuation school in his village. This instruction, and the practical experience gained in his daily work, has enabled him to enter the nearest Winter School of Agriculture. Since it is fixed in a town some distance from his home, he lodged there during the session, from November to April. The curriculum, over two semesters, is drawn up with a view to the special industry of the district which the school serves. Willem receives instruction of a theoretical kind from professors of chemistry and physics; a case, perhaps, of a little fish and very big whales, for Willem is not brilliant. He takes classes also in dairying, the nature of soils, tillage, and the raising of crops. For all this, and more, with the use of first-rate apparatus, he pays a comparatively small fee—about twenty shillings a year, I believe, and this is remitted to some of his class-fellows whose parents are unable to pay it. He will be eighteen when he passes (as he hopes) his examination at the end of the second term—he is now in his first—and that will complete his agricultural instruction, which has been more extensive than most young farmers receive in any country.

The second lad—he is now nearly twenty-one—is the son of a Westland gardener, or rather of a Westland man who is experimenting with its special cultures a little farther afield. The father is an enterprising, hard-working grower, always to be found in his hothouses. He speaks French fluently; he has no English, but has been in England, and can tell you most of what there is to know about his own culture there. He has been to Paris also, but the French gardeners, he says, taught him less than the English. In fact, he told me that Dutch intensive gardening sprang from Norfolk. His son, now with him in the garden, is the product of a higher-burgher school with special commercial classes. The family

is Roman Catholic. This son was seventeen or eighteen when he attended the Winter School courses, getting instruction in botany, natural history, and meteorology, chemistry, flower-, fruit-, and vegetable-culture and the like. He did not sit any leaving examination. It was in the course of his studies that he visited Belgian gardens, of which he speaks interestingly in fair, business-like English.

So much for the representatives of the young working farmers, gardeners, and florists who show enterprise in educating themselves in their business. Take the case now of their cousins in the towns. I have one in view: the son of a workman living in Amsterdam, working in a joiner's shop there, and attending an evening trade-school and school of design; like any artisan among ourselves, attending science and art classes. With this Amsterdam lad I shall take another of whom I know nothing, except what I learnt from himself when visiting a day trade-school in a very small town. In it he was practically serving an apprenticeship to the trade of a smith, which he intends to follow. Between them these two youths represent many thousands of their class and age throughout Holland receiving trade-school instruction, an eighth of them (I have been told) free of fees.

Now for such lads as these the question at thirteen is not higher-burgher school or gymnasium, but an immediate or a postponed wage. Most have no choice; they must become wage-earners at once. There has long been provided for them the so-called burgher night schools. The training in these schools, so far as it goes, was designed to be technical, in a liberal sense. The instruction is theoretical, with a practical application to the local industries; and is continued over two to four years. All communes with a population of 10,000 were

obliged to equip such a school, and many smaller ones have done so voluntarily.

On the other hand, there were always boys of the working class whose parents were able to pay for further day schooling, and therefore sent them after the primary school to the burgher day school. But the burgher day school was a failure. It was found that lads who passed through its two-years' course, issued equipped, not as workmen, but as clerks. For the curriculum of these burgher day schools was in the main literary and theoretical; at any rate, it was not practical—not at all so practical as in the night schools. Moreover, it was just as literary (and as non-technical) as, rightly, was instruction in the higher-burgher schools which we have just been considering, and by and bye the boys for whom it was designed found their way instead to the higher-burgher schools with a three-year' course. That was only one year more than in the other, and the additional cost was not great.

Thus the burgher day schools suited no one. Had the object been to turn out clerks, they might as well have been turned out at the higher-burgher schools. But seeing it was workmen who were wanted, the burgher day schools were not sufficiently practical to supply them. Not one of these schools remains.

It was in these circumstances that there emerged the trade-school (*ambachts school*), that excellent institution for the industrial instruction of her artisans, which in the last ten years has modified Holland's whole educational system. Beginning through private effort, the *ambachts scholen* have splendidly justified their existence, and the money which State, province, commune, and various societies expend upon them. The Government subsidy, spread over some fifty schools, considerably exceeds £30,000, and as much again comes from other sources.

There is no large town without a trade-school, and some have two, and Amsterdam has at least four (one of them for girls). The one in which I found the second lad I have referred to, working in a smith's shop with two forges, was in a village of a few thousand inhabitants, with hamlets scattered around it. The course is generally for three years; and the curriculum, both theoretical and practical, varies only slightly, according to local needs. There are, on the other hand, considerable local differences in the fees, which run from a guilder or two at Den Bosch to forty at Middelharnis. But then at Middelharnis many pupils are received free, or on payments in accordance with income.

I need not strain at figures; nor shall I follow the development of the evening *ambachts school*. The purpose of this chapter is not to complete a digest of Dutch secondary education, but to indicate the ideals which its most notable institutions illustrate. The establishing of the trade-school is a fine piece of work. Dutch education was overbuilt in a historical and literary direction, and the trade-school has masoned it up strongly on the industrial side. Yet it is already being asked if the trade-school has not achieved its success almost too signally.

There appears to be no doubt that the *ambachts school* does its business. It turns out workmen. All those concerned with its direction are strong in the assurance that its product is far superior to the workshop-trained 'prentice. I state their opinion as they expressed it; but I must add that my inquiries outside the partial environs of the schools elicited the information that their pupils are much sought after by employers. The danger, say some friendly critics of the *ambachts school*, is that the workmen whom it turns out go through the mill too easily for themselves, and issue from it too wholly workmen and nothing more.

Theirs, of course, is the view which fears an excessive technicality in education, as it fears over-regulation in life. I should say that it is widely held. The Dutch are onlookers (who, as we know, see most) at a game in which they regard Germans and English as the rival sides. A native orderliness inclines them to favour German system, but they are not blind to its defects. They are not admirers of our own free-and-easy methods, but they are often frank in praise of their results. The appreciation of these is greatest in the men who are nearest the practice of industry. It is probably, as yet, in the country rather than in the schools that there is recognised a something resulting from the English training which is valuable and has not been achieved by the Dutch.

Be that as it may, there is noticeable, at least faintly, a reaction from any system of industrial instruction which will spoon-feed the artisan, and turn him out secure in a workman's wage, but without the "character" which it ought to be the aim of secondary education to foster. The success of such a system would keep back many a working lad who has it in him to rise above the workman's estate in which it only confirms him. It seems likely, therefore, that the development of trade-school education in the immediate future will be in the direction of intermediate technical schools, like the new one in Utrecht, providing a wider culture than that at which the *ambachts school* at present aims.

The Dutch girl has much the same education as the Dutch boy, and in a great many cases they receive it together. There are no gymnasiums for girls alone, and no University colleges for women. Separate schools for extended elementary and secondary instruction are

provided, and are largely used. In the bigger towns are "higher-burgher schools for girls," as they are always called, though they are not officially recognised by that title. Middle-class opinion, I should judge, prefers them, but as often as not for reasons arising out of local conditions rather than from any objection to the principle of co-education, about which I have not found any tempestuous opinion in Holland. One father of daughters said to me, "I would send my girls to a mixed higher-burgher school if work were everything: the boys must work, and they keep the girls up. But if I send them there, they will in all likelihood spoil their lives by overwork." His is probably a common case.

For the girl, as for the boy, the gymnasium is the main gateway to higher education. The higher-burgher school girl, therefore, is seldom "blue." She is equipped for the posts—educational, scientific, artistic, and those of the Civil Services—in which she is permitted to compete against or alongside of her brother. Or possibly she specialises at the Conservatorium or the Academy of Art (perhaps the Dramatic School), until she marries and forgets or renounces her artistic ambitions. Most often the daughter of the comfortable homes in Holland seems ready to devote her liberal education to a routine of domestic duties, or (shall we say, rather?) of domestic life. Revolvers are not unknown; they are more numerous than anyone probably dreamed of ten years ago. Yet when she leaves school at sixteen or seventeen, the *bakvish—tusschen servet en tafellaken* ("between napkin and tablecloth")—though she may not be very handy in the house, has rarely developed the unrest in the slow housewifery round exhibited by the high school girls of other lands. Those who explain the last as being unsexed through having had a man's training, are confronted by an im-

posing argument in the domesticity of the co-educated Dutch woman. Certainly marriage has not ceased to be the career of her ambition.

At the other end of the social scale, where, as we have seen, the woman so constantly adds to the income, the girl, like her brother, at thirteen is faced with the problem of the immediate wage. So urgent is it, that a private society pays the parents of a few of the children at a trade-school in the Hague 1s. 3d. a week to compensate for the consequent loss of earnings. The complaint is made also that the specific trade-schools for men are frequently shut to their sisters; so that the humblest girls have scarcely been swept at all into the movement for the industrial education of women that of recent years has been wide and rapid. Education, like the Factory Acts, has rather made their lot harder. Curiously, in Holland, the farmers' daughters have evaded the opportunities of agricultural education so avidly seized by them in Denmark, for example; only those in the enterprising fen-colonies, so far as I know, showing any initiative in instruction.

It is thus from the *bourgeoisie* mainly, the classes immediately above the humblest, that come the house-keepers, *kinder-juffrouwen*, nurses, lady's maids, linen maids, costume-makers, and domestic servants who are being turned out by the industrial and trade schools for women. These schools show the widest local variety. They are not State-organised. The schools have their own diplomas, and pupils in many of them are granted the certificates issued by unions of the teachers. After the Dutch manner we know now to look for, the private effort which created and directs these schools is supported by State subsidies, as well as by others from communal and private treasuries. They have in common the admirable aim of catching the girl whose schooling

is over when she leaves the elementary school at thirteen, and providing her with systematic training. Their variety exhibits the whole range of opinion, as we have already observed it in the educational opportunities of the lads, concerning the extent to which a general culture ought to be associated with industrial instruction.

The scope of their teaching is illustrated in the trade-school for girls at the Hague (*'s-Gravenhaagsche Vakschool voor Meisjes*) over which I had the privilege of being shown the other day in working hours by the directress. It has completed its ninth year, and stands a little apart from the others in the directness with which it brings its pupils to their business. The Hague ladies sometimes take its courses. It is a haven to which sometimes the newly affianced girl flees, panic-stricken, on realising that her splendid education and the experience of her domesticated home will not have taught her how to cook a potato for a husband, or to attend to his dress shirts. At night, domestic servants follow their young mistresses through the crafts of kitchen and laundry, and the decoration of the table.

But the "full training" is the thing. The girl entering on it at sixteen issues forth two years later the complete housekeeper, assured, I am told, of a situation, and a commencing salary of £25, which strikes one as modest in view of the long list of her accomplishments: cooking, ironing, laundry, domestic economy, cutting-out and drawing of patterns, white seam, costume-making, darning, Swiss darning, mending, hygiene and bandaging, knowledge of stuffs and wares, pedagogy, botany, the management of young children. This miracle is performed for £25 a year. The training as *juffrouw* and the lady's and linen maid costs from £2 to £3 a year only.

In the earlier classes, on the day I visited the school, girls from thirteen to sixteen were attending two-yearly courses as domestic servants, four- and six-yearly courses in costumes, three-yearly courses in the management of the linen-cupboard and wardrobe. I was certainly struck, as I had been in the *ambachts scholen*, by a liberal and responsible atmosphere in the classrooms. The scheme showed traces of Dutch elaboration. A *juffrouw* was being taught (so far as may be) the art of telling stories. A lady's maid, who presumably will travel, had lessons in geography. And in the last room which I was shown—a kind of night nursery in its furnishing—a nurse was playing games with two mites, workmen's children kept on hand as models for the *kinder-juffrouw* to try her 'prentice art upon.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE ACADEMIE

THE recognised approach to the *Academie*, if we except that of Delft, as has been mentioned, is through the gymnasium. Towns with a population of 20,000 inhabitants, unless specially exempt, are obliged by law to provide, and partially maintain one, and all have done so except Den Helder, which is too poor, and Tilburg, whose Protestants are mainly artisans. The small town of Tiel, on the other hand, having on its hands an old Latin School, modelled it as a gymnasium; which brings up the number of these institutions to thirty. There are enrolled at them over 2100 students, a fourth of them girls. Owing to the objection to co-education among Roman Catholics, girls were debarred from the gymnasiums at Hertogenbosch and Maastricht, in the Roman Catholic Provinces, until a few years ago. In addition there are ten special gymnasiums, Roman Catholic and Reformed.

The fees vary—the average lies between fl. 50 and fl. 100 per annum—but the curriculum for the six years' course is the same in all. Naturally it is the classics that receive most attention; probably only a fifth of the students who go forward from them to the Universities aim at a Science degree, to which there are other roads open. Hebrew is an optional subject in many of them; so is calisthenics, which, however, yearly

becomes more popular, 75 per cent. of the students at the Hague and Amsterdam taking out the classes in it.

The subject of these gymnasiums is a little colourless for the reader, and the years spent at them are for the students, one imagines, a period of rather grim hard work. To enter them at any class, a stiff examination must be passed. Once entered, the student receives instruction that is excellent, as indeed it ought to be, since, I have estimated, it costs the State and the Communes, together or separately, from six to seven times the amount of his fees, and is imparted to the 2100 students by over 450 teachers, quite two-thirds of them possessing (as indeed they must before they can be appointed) the degree of Doctor in the subject they profess. At the end of his course the student, whether at the public or the private gymnasium, can sit an examination, and if successful receive a diploma, which admits him to the Universities.

The interest of the Dutch Universities for the foreigner lies in their history, or in the personalities of the many men in them—such as Dr. Heymans and Dr. Kapteyn of Groningen, and Dr. Hugo de Vries of Amsterdam—who have already taken places beside their great predecessors in service to the intellectual life of Europe. Both interests demand another pen than mine; which contents itself with indicating the presence of the Universities in the scheme of national education which these chapters sketch.

They number five; Leyden, established in 1575; Groningen, in 1614; Utrecht, in 1634; Amsterdam, an erection of the municipality, founded last century, with a history earlier as an Athenæum, dating back to 1630; and the Technical School at Delft, the old Polytechnic, recently raised to University rank. There is also the "Free" University of Amsterdam, a Calvinist institution

for the study of Theology, Law, Philosophy, and Letters, and a monument to the religious strife of the last half-century.

The students at Delft, as has been indicated, advance there mainly by way of the higher-burgher schools, not of the gymnasiums. In spite of the fee of fl. 200 per year, for a course of four years, which for Holland is high, they crowd to it in increasing numbers—there were 800 in 1901; 1243 in 1907,—and passing through it go out equipped for the highest posts as engineers, architects, and naval architects.

In each of the other Universities (the “Free” University of Amsterdam excepted) there are five faculties: Theology, Jurisprudence, Medicine, Mathematics and Physics, and Philosophy. To obtain the degree of Doctor the student must pass a professional examination and a doctoral examination; after these follows the public promotion.

The degree of Doctor is given in—

I. Theology.

II. The Sciences of Law or Politics.

III. Medicine, Surgery, and Obstetrics.

IV. (*a*) Mathematics and Astronomy, (*b*) Mathematics and Physics, (*c*) Chemistry, (*d*) Mineralogy and Geology, (*e*) Botany and Zoology, (*f*) Pharmacy.

V. (*a*) Classical Literature, (*b*) Semitic Literature, (*c*) Dutch Literature, (*d*) Language and Literature of the Indian Archipelago, (*e*) Philosophy. There is, it will be observed, no degree in History.

All students at the Universities, however, do not aim at a Doctor's degree: most theological students, for example, after passing the candidate's examination, go before a commission of clergymen and are admitted as “Proponents.” Then they are eligible to be “called” to a Protestant Church. Many medical students, again, are

content to pass the State examination, the essential scientific examination which gives one the title of physician (*arts*), without writing and defending the thesis which wins the ornamental title of "doctor." Indeed, many medical students are not eligible for the "doctor's" degree, for they come from the higher-burgher school, and the "doctor's" degree can only be obtained by those who have gone through the gymnasiums or have passed an equivalent examination.

Utrecht, the centre of Orthodox opinion, sends out the greatest number of theological students, whereas Leyden, which teaches a more liberal theology, is strongest in law. At Utrecht and Leyden there are observatories, and it is in them that astronomy is chiefly studied.

Dutch Universities, like the Scots, are not residential. The students live with their families or in lodgings in the town, each of them a link of interest, or of self-interest at any rate, between the University and the citizens. In some of the Dutch university towns there have been times when the relations between town and gown have been strained; the burghers, or some of them, have resented the extravagance of the students, which they compare with their own straitened or frugal mode of living. In Holland, as in other countries, students are apt to be spendthrift, and it may be they appear to be more excessively so than they really are in a country where the rest of the community are so orderly in their expenses.

With the society of the towns many of the students are on an intimate footing; but there are some who hold aloof, ostensibly with the view of preserving their liberty of action. The Dutch student leads a singularly untrammelled life. For him there is no Chapel and no Gate. The dull lectures he is at liberty to avoid. Sometimes

he misuses his freedom. We have heard of students spending years at the University without entering a classroom. Generally these are young fellows of private fortune, studying in the Law, without any intention of practising their profession later, who look upon the years at the University as a time for gaiety and pleasure merely.

There are fewer such now than there used to be. The gymnasium system has had the effect of sending lads to the University later in life and presumably with more wisdom than formerly ; it is admitted that most of the students work well. But many who work well, and take a brilliant degree, are irregular in their attendance on lectures. There are easier and quicker roads than through the classroom to the knowledge necessary for the examinations. Law students go regularly to lectures for two or three years only out of the six or seven of their course. There is the same freedom in the other faculties, but for several reasons it is not so generally taken advantage of. The thorough practical knowledge demanded before a medical degree is granted, can only be attained by attendance on the demonstrations of the professors. Theological students, again, are constrained to attend classes more regularly than their fellows by a sense of honour as well as by the instigation of prudence. They pay less, and might be suspected of seeking to live their student life on false pretences did they not follow the classes closely. They have to keep in view, also, the good conduct leaving-certificate, without which advancement in their profession might be difficult.

The Dutch student is his own master, and for what he does is accountable to no one, except his parents, it may be, and the canton judge, willy-nilly, if in his pursuit of liberty he has had the misfortune to come into conflict with the police.

No account of Dutch university life is complete that does not mention the Corps, in which these scattered and freedom-loving students, otherwise united under no authority, are in a manner held together. There is a Students' Corps in each University, and all of them have very much the same constitution. At the head of the Corps, to administer its affairs and attend to all its interests, is a Senate or College, composed of a rector, a secretary, and three members, elected annually, generally from among the students of four years' standing. A member of the Corps is entitled to be elected to the Corps Club and to any of its various social and sports societies. The Corps, in fact, is the heart and spring of student life.

The novice, or "green," has to endure for three or four weeks a severe test of his spirit. The first thing he does is to leave his name with the Senate, after which he starts upon a round of calls upon the members of the Corps. The reception accorded him is of a kind less agreeable to himself than to his entertainer, who discovers a painstaking interest in all his doings, in his religious views, his morals, his scholarship, the various members of his family. Before the interview ends, the "green" has to get a signature to his visiting-book, which is examined by the Senate once a week.

From early morning until ten at night he is at the beck and call of any member of the Corps who may be feeling in need of a little entertainment, and with the best grace he can muster he has to submit to any usage, howsoever insulting, so long as it falls short of physical constraint. It is a bad time for molly-coddles and bumptious fellows. In this common discipline, however, the "greens" of each year are united in an informal body, with certain rights which are jealously preserved. One of them is the sanctity of their social meetings, from

which any old member who invades them is expelled by officials whose title of *uitsmyters* is exactly translated by "chuckers-out." When the novitiate is ended the "greens" are formally installed by the Rector in all the privileges of membership at a special meeting of the Corps; and they too, of course, drive through the streets decked in the colours of their Faculty, and hold a feast of fraternisation at the club.

Every fifth year each University in Holland celebrates its foundation by a week of feasting,—a mode characteristically Dutch. It is a time for the meeting of old friends; and on the first night the members of each year's class, who have come from all parts of the country to attend the celebrations, dine together somewhere in the town, and afterwards march together, headed by bands of music, to the pleasure-garden where the festivities are wound up each day. It is impossible to describe the hilarious excitement as these parties keep arriving, marching, or rather leaping and dancing arm-in-arm, through the garden to the strains of *Io Vivat*; and it reaches a climax when the older members appear,—survivors of classes away back in the "sixties" and "seventies," dancing and singing with as much spirit as the youngest. To-morrow these elders will have relapsed into their usual grave demeanour, not to be tempted from it for another five years, if they live so long.

No one who knows these Dutchmen would grudge them that hour of high spirits, or think the worse of them for it; but it may be doubted if there is another country in the world where professors and statesmen, and lawyers and country gentlemen, would be found sufficiently ingenuous to present such an exhibition of *abandon* in public. The reader, remembering one of the failings of the Dutchman, may say that *schnapps* loosens the

joints. But neither his frolicsomeness nor his sentimentality is merely imbibed. Both are as much part of his nature as his intellectual hardness. We might say of him as Mackellar said of the Master in Stevenson's novel, that he has an outer sensibility and an inner toughness. Yet he is at the other pole from Mr. Bally.

I may be permitted to recall a pretty pageant I witnessed many years ago, now, with which the Students' Corps of Utrecht celebrated the 260th year of their University. "Town" had followed "Gown" into very high jinks. For a week the people of Utrecht were just a little bit "daft." The receptions and orations of the opening day were caught up in a whirl of concert and garden-party, reunion dinner and bal-champêtre, and the feast-week ended with a burst of horseplay only a little less boisterous than we should tolerate. It was to crown these University celebrations that the masquerade I allude to was given, representing the Tournament in Vienna in 1560, when Maximilian, King of Bohemia, honoured his guest, the Duke of Bavaria. Some two hundred students took part in it, half of them representing historical personages, the others their heralds and bodyguards, and all of them in armour and trappings and costumes, careful reproductions of the originals.

For the whole week they played their mimic parts. Men-at-arms stood at every corner, knights in armour pranced in every street. During that time the student who represented the king held his court, dined in state, with a hundred knights round him, watched the dance from his throne with the beauty of his choice seated beside him, and received the obeisance of the citizens (punctilious on the part of the professors) when he rode out with his retinue. On the field of the tournament he

flew his colours over his pavilion, set beside that where the Orange waved above the young and as yet uncrowned Wilhelmina, and in the name of the Koning his mock majesty's heralds announced to the real sovereign that the tourney was at an end.

I wonder if the young fellow felt any decline when Sunday morning came, and he had to step out from all the pomp and circumstance of royalty? There were signs, at any rate, that the coat of mail sat as heavily upon him as the cares of State are said to do. And, speaking from the spectator's point of view, one never quite lost the sense of a mimic show; except once, when the procession passed through the Maliebaan in the darkening to the music of pipes and tambours. The ostrich plumes of the knights reared against the overhanging branches, and their armour glanced in the light of the torches, in the smoky gloom of which the mimicry was hid for a moment, and the pageant of the sixteenth century was realised.

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We started out on this inquiry into Dutch education on the *Academie* steps after a day's ghost-hunting in Leyden. Let us end it together in salutary refreshment at the Levedag there. It is an inn for *bona-fide* travellers only. The urbane, elderly waiters shut the door against all shades. Mine host attends upon us a little lordily, which braces our self-respect; it is well to feel that we are the important personages in the present at least. Even the present is a little out of date with him; all his concern, you can see, is for to-night's Promotion dinner, when still another young gentleman, having stormed the heights of the Doctoraat, will gather his friends and relations around him to pledge his future conquests in a great carouse.

Listen to the *Io Vivats* in Minerva across the street. Does not the *Academie* chime the generations as merrily and irrevocably as the Stadhuis bells the quarters? Ghosts are all very well; but here we will drink to Youth, while it is yet busy making the Past.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE EDUCATIONAL IDEAL

IT will be gathered from this sketch of the educational opportunities of Holland that she takes the instruction of her people very seriously.

The political and religious strife in which education has been involved has left marks upon it which seem ridiculous to the stranger; even the stranger from a country where frequently religious schism is socially and intellectually embittering, and has disgracefully sacrificed education for catch-penny triumphs, especially in the English part of it where a liberal culture might expect to be nourished most.

I have, however, discussed this sorrowful question in earlier chapters, and here will only venture (for it is a perilous subject) on two observations as regards its effects upon education. One is, that narrow as the spirit may be which is at present triumphing—for it undoubtedly is triumphing—and hostile to the intellectual ideal which I believe to be still the worthiest thing in Holland, it does not appear to have affected to any great extent the efficiency of the schools. The weight of opinion is, I think, on the whole to that effect. The other is, that it is not illiberalism only that can be intolerant, and that there was perhaps a need that the older intellectuals of Holland should be made to realise how human nature craves for a mystery no less than for knowledge. I have

been much struck by the almost identical confession made to me by several of the anti-Clericals in regard to the Antirevolutionnaires: "I used to think it was hypocrisy, now I believe it is conviction."

Two traditions in the country are at grips. It can hardly be said of the one that understanding leavens its fanaticism; but the other, perhaps, by such a recognition of sincerity in those with whom it has little sympathy, will add a grace to the ideal it strives to preserve, which will give that ideal an enhanced educational value.

I have been sketching a scheme that is evidently the creation of a disinterested love of education. It may show, here or there, the bias of a class or of a way of thinking, but never the deliberate sacrifice, to the interests of either, of the right of the people to be instructed. No government can assess that right too generously, except by thinking that its realisation will accomplish too much. If in Holland that error has been fallen into in the past, it is being dealt with faithfully in the present. There is a party there—there are parties everywhere—who are assured that they know something which it is still better that the masses should have. They may be right; their conviction, even if they are wrong, has a value. Only one hopes that now that the masses are offered it also, they will remain happy in the other and older possession which was won for them by so determined if misjudged an optimism.

The stranger, viewing such a scheme, judges of it by his own predilections, of course, but still more as it contrasts with the practice of his own country. It is possible that I am unduly laying stress upon a detail when, with our own unhappy chaos in mind, I say that the most admirable thing about the Dutch education is its strict supervision by the State. It is not cast-iron in consequence. Great discretion is permitted to the local

authorities, even in the elementary stage. The secondary, as we have seen, is largely the public organisation of private effort, and thus is generally kept inspired by local needs. Higher education is entirely free. But having adopted a scheme, and become responsible for it by imposing it upon the nation, the State is determined to secure for it an efficiency that is impossible if every unqualified person is to be at liberty to exploit a rival scheme of his or her own. We at home daily see the lamentable consequences of *that*.

It is difficult to avoid such comparisons, and if they are odious when made they are still more so when only half-made. I do not say that the masses in Holland are as civilised as in England, for they are not, as everybody who is acquainted with both countries knows; but that, as almost everybody says, they are not so well instructed—of that I am far from being so sure. Those immediately above them certainly are, class for class, immeasurably better educated there than here, in that narrower sense. With such a system of instruction they cannot fail to be. But something more than instruction, something more, too, than the Doleerende dreams, goes to the making of nations; though what shall we say is the secret of their “thriving genius”?

Education is free only to such as cannot pay for it. Those who can, the Dutch are cynical or simple enough to believe, would despise it as a gift. It is compulsory in a country where compulsion is particularly out of favour; but between them, the inspectors and commissions, and the fear of seven days' imprisonment, bring the children to the sacred fount. Indubitably they do not make them all drink. You do not require to visit a reformatory (*tucht*) school to know that many leave the primary school at thirteen because it is the legal age, and not because they have achieved the sixth standard, or

even the third. Were I to speak of teachers in Dutch elementary schools only from the few whom I have met, I should rank them high indeed for enlightenment and a great disinterestedness. I cannot forget, however, things read (about rights of men and Juliana feasts, for example), nor opinions heard. There must be some truth, one supposes, lying in the complaint so often made that in the class which recruits many of the teachers, the Christian and social graces, at least, do not conspicuously shine. And from the reports of the undisciplined mutinies against small oppressions referred to, I should judge that among its virtues also, that of humour is lamentably wanting.

I have shown with what thoroughness and patience the new structure of industrial education has been reared. The older one of the intermediate higher-burgher school weathers the tests of time, and Higher Education reshapes itself according to modern needs. The admirable feature of the whole is its continuity. Instruction in Holland is so orderly that, conversing with a man in the street or in society, you can almost with certainty tell in what institutions he has been educated. There is something repugnant to us in such uniformity, but is it certain that the alternative is not this, that, speaking with men in the street, despite the colours of their ties, you must wonder if they can have been to school at all!

It may strike one as curious that this uniformity should be suffered by a people whose motto only too persistently is, "Let every man be persuaded in his own mind." For the value of orderliness is more real to the community and the mass of men than to the individual man, and for the first and second also there lies in it a danger. Most men it confirms in their selfishness, and the collectiveness soon becomes arrogant or too great or too pure, and it is necessary for the community to

be roused out of its routine. The orderly, educational training does not necessarily educate a man at all: it only brings him to the brink of the highest educational possibilities, and enables him, though an ordinary enough person, to take the step across. For the extraordinary man it will not compare with an aggressive, desultory training: that leaves him just as educated as ever he could have been. Still, in Holland as elsewhere, the mass of men are only ordinary, and the system we are considering does economise effort and prevent the splendid wastage that one sees at home.

There is the further consideration that Government could not build up such a structure had they not the will and the effort of the people behind them. The Dutch are persuaded in their own minds that education is the highest good. That is a tradition with them. If it dates back to their golden time and the name of Grotius, as many say, it is a recovered tradition. It may date back so far; so many things in Holland do. But it springs directly and has come down unbrokenly from the other source of her notable forces, the French Revolution, and the instinct of the Calvinists is sure enough in entitling themselves the Antirevolutionnaires. The principle of the neutral school, for example, was implanted in the educational system by its earliest cultivators, the Société du Bien Public, the famous Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen, at the end of the eighteenth century.

Whatever its origin, it is a living tradition. I do not say that it works strongly as yet in the peasantry. It is a greater influence, it seems to me, among the artisans than among the smaller tradesmen and the *bourgeoisie*. Its appearance in the general commercial classes is comparatively recent, and I am not certain that there it is of so pure a type. It is still true to say, as it was ten

years ago, I repeat, that Holland is not so much a highly educated country as it is a country of highly educated people. But the number of highly educated people increases, even if their ideal of education is not always so disinterested. One cannot live long in the country without being amazed to see for how much education counts, the sacrifices for their children's education that so many parents make, and the sacrifices that voluntarily and compulsorily the children make for their own.

These virtues, however, are not without their defects. It was long ago said that the Dutch, in the matter of examinations, were the Chinese of Europe, and examinations have at last to-day become a weariness against which the flesh of the sufferers revolts. The continuity of instruction, admirable as it is, has led to excessive hardships. I have spoken of boys who, in order that they may get a higher-burgher school education, are sent to lodge in a town at a distance from their homes. Here is another case known to me, and not, I am informed, quite uncommon: a boy began his course in a higher-burgher school in the Hague, where his parents resided. His father was exchanged to a post in Arnhem. There is, of course, a higher-burgher school there. But rather than that the continuity of the boy's education should be broken, the father went alone to Arnhem, and his wife continued in the Hague with her son until he had completed the course there.

English public school education occasions no such case; but among English middle-class people, whose children attend school in the town where their parents reside, such a rigid regard for the unbroken curriculum is inconceivable. These Dutch examples, moreover, to be considered justly, have to be viewed in the light of the determined objection of Dutch parents

generally to the education of their boys away from the home and their own eyes. I have even been told of cases where, so jealous were the parents for their child's regular attendance at the elementary school, they returned her after an infectious illness before a complete recovery had been made. That seems unbelievable, but I have been assured of its truth.

Parents are realising that the strain put upon their children by their schooling is too exacting. "I am really sorry for my boys and girls," a Dutch lady said to me the other day, with a kind of helpless affection that was pathetic. The father whom I have quoted as telling me that he would send his girls to a higher-burgher school if he wished them to be worked to death, was not merely airing a gibe. Another confessed to me that his daughter was working herself into ill health,—but what could he do? She had to earn her living. She had chosen the career of teacher. There was no entering it save through the strait gate of "exams." And there could be no turning back.

Is one wrong in thinking that in the past this strain was an overstrain, showing itself in a certain lassitude in all but the most physically and mentally hardy of Dutchmen when their first youth was past?

The criticism of the English eye in Holland has always been that the race requires exercise. It was probably deceived to some extent by the peculiarity of complexion—"the faint, pale blue, which might well be called watery," an old traveller called it—which is to be attributed to other causes than the absence of sport from the life. It will be deceiving itself now in respect of the present generation if it accounts for any of their defects by a shirking of bodily activities. One thing—the English eye should remark—young Dutchmen do, even when they do not play football, or play it only on Sunday:

they serve their country. All of them, indeed, do not do so, for the State cannot afford universal service, especially since it expends so much upon the health and welfare of the conscript ; but all upon whom the lot falls, whatever their influence, or occupation, or social degree, serve side by side. The substitute is a figure of the past.

Equally erroneous would be the conclusion, because of the strict organisation of primary instruction, and the responsibility imposed upon the student later by a social usage, or even from the exaction of military service, that the Dutch youth is not free. It is more true to say that from his entrance into the primary school he is entrusted with his own making ; in the largest sense, that is entrusted to the boy under the Dutch system to a greater extent than it is to the public schoolboy of England, for whom, like every good thing, this freedom is claimed. And coming of a hardy and full-blooded race, the Dutch boy has always found an outlet for robust spirits.

But, on the other hand, it does seem true that the conditions of his life, as schoolboy and as student, have deprived this product of a fine and systematic education of the element of organisation in his sports and games—the logical, or rather the practical, basis of *esprit de corps* that underlies ours. As a boy he snatches his play in the playground, when there is one, and the square, which in Holland is always at hand ; and as a student he does not find in the regime of the Corps the discipline of the cricket or football combination. Things, I have indicated, are changing ; but here, it can hardly be denied, is one thing still lacking in Dutch educational influences.

It is, however, less in the region of bodily than of mental activities that many Dutchmen on reaching full manhood seem to me to exhibit signs of an overstrain in

youth. I have elsewhere extolled the intellectual energy of a special class in Holland. It is possible that I have found too large a measure of it in this class, and have overlooked it too entirely in others. I do not think so; yet it is of members of this class especially that I am thinking now, when I say that many Dutchmen do not crown in later years the attainments of their youth. Then they displayed an unusual mental energy, but they have not kept it up. They are in many cases men born, if not with a silver spoon in their mouth, at least with one of serviceable nickel, and they seem in some cases content to lie back at a very early age, and listen to Emerson's injunction to hear what wine and roses say. And often, I imagine, this is due to an overstrain in youth. Yet here one must not be deceived by a disinterested acquiescence in their limited opportunities which I have already extolled in many members of this class, or overlook the conscientiousness, and sometimes the enthusiasm, which they bring to their restricted round of duties.

These criticisms upon their splendid system of education are frequent in the mouths of many young Dutchmen themselves, and we find them, rather amusingly, turn wistful eyes upon some results of our own, in which they yet discover so much to condemn. The most highly educated among them, dispossessed of the old authority in the State which descended to their fathers, seem often assailed by a sense of futility. It brings a whiff of bitterness into the fine mockery of their conversation, a mockery that, like an equally fine reserve in their bearing, gives distinction to the Dutch Burgher manner. They will tell you sometimes that "they have been taught to do nothing in six languages." Like men in their case and mood all the world over at this moment, they almost imagine that if only they could

take a spade and *dig*, their *malaise* would be dispersed. Perhaps that *malaise*, the inheritance of our generation, hurts especially in a country where outlets for talents and energies are so constantly denied. Holland does not escape the squeeze of competitive pressure. Its youth as a whole is too vigorous to accept calm, however wise, for its desire. There begins to show a discontent with a life spent in the service of producers instead of itself producing. Many of the young men in circles where the convention or fashion of a University education is still powerful, who a few years ago would have submitted themselves to it as a matter of course, now turn rebellious thoughts to other careers. They are breaking bounds. And thus the tendency to move out, to expand, is influencing the educational ideal also.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE COLONIES IN DUTCH HOMES

IT is often forgotten—the Dutch themselves were tardy in remembering it—that far beyond their beautifully grey but sometimes gloomy country, whose narrow frontiers I have enclosed upon their homes, they possess another in the East, the very Summer of the World.

In round figures, their overseas possessions are fifty times the size of the home country, with between six and seven times its population. Surinam, or Dutch Guiana, which is rather larger than Java, and the six small islands of the West Indies composing the colony of Curaçao, are relatively unimportant. They are the homes of few pure-bred Dutchmen, and at present between them deplete the treasury of £130,000 a year. When we speak of the Dutch colonies, we are thinking of the tropical archipelago that stretches for three thousand miles from Sumatra to New Guinea; and generally when we write of them it is Java only that is meant. The colonising activities of the Dutch in the East have been concentrated during three centuries upon Java. The rich and beautiful island of Celebes, for example, another Britain in extent, is still largely undeveloped. Dutch Borneo, again, as large as Austria-Hungary, has fewer inhabitants than Staffordshire, and the Europeans in it would not fill a respectable Surrey village. Sumatra,

with an area equal to that of Germany, has not a fourteenth of its population.

Sumatra, indeed, though so sparsely peopled, is no longer to be disconsidered, even in relation to Java itself. The gold and silver mines of Palembang, the petroleum springs and the coal seams discovered in it, and the famous tobacco plantations of Deli, have advertised its resources. Banka tin, a notable export in the days of Raffles, and long before that, is the last of the important Government products, and has been known in recent years to convert the Indian deficit into a gain. Returning colonists paint in Eastern colours the magnificence of the interior scenery now being opened out to their eyes. Fortune is at last smiling upon Sumatra. Its progress, in a word, is one of the notable facts of recent colonial history.

But interest in the Netherland-Indies still centres in Java. The spring of Dutch colonial enterprise is there. It is from its capital, Batavia, where the first fort was raised three centuries ago last year, that we must watch the highly concentrated administrative machine at work. When the new conscience at home, so acutely awakened at this moment, prefigures its responsibilities, it is in relation to a vaguely conceived admixture of peoples, which it names, generally, Javanese. With an area and population roundly equal to those of England, Java contains three-fourths of Queen Wilhelmina's subjects in the East, and is the source of four-fifths of the revenue of her empire there, fourteen times its own size. The industries fed by all the islands are located in this one. In its *residencies* and protectorates, now that Achin is subdued, all the pressing Dutch colonial problems are stated in their fullest terms; and among their fertile populations are found, most complexly constituted, the native organisations with which these problems are

involved. Above all, the great majority of Dutch colonial homes are established there. Java stands for Holland in the East.

The picture of Java—derived from letters and books—which rises to one's eye is of the sun breaking on stucco walls, the quivering air fed by the flames of flower and blossom; of the sheen of copper flesh in crowded *passars*; in its streets little native ladies in indigo-blue and loose *kalambis*; portlier white ladies in their embroidered *sarongs*, their bare feet smartly slippered, shopping under sunshades; cool marble loggias; the siesta in bare, sequestered, whitewashed rooms; the procession to the bath as the sun sinks, and the return with the dusk to tea and the Occident on the wide veranda.

Now when the observer asks what part this Holland in the East plays in the homes of Holland in Europe, he is rather put at a loss. What part, would the stranger gather, does our India play among ourselves? There are Nederland-Indian families, as there are Anglo-Indian, whose cadets have created a kind of island gentry, or carry on a tradition of hereditary service. But outside of these, interest in the Indies is fitful. I happened to be in Holland in August 1894, when the news arrived of the Lombok disaster. An Amsterdam paper, I believe, had published a brief telegram in the morning, and it and others as they came in were printed on slips—there are no “special editions” in Holland—and distributed in the streets of Utrecht, where I was living. The emotion they caused was profound. There was a momentary feeling that the youth of Holland, or at any rate of the army at home, should volunteer for the Indies to avenge the ambush. I do not know that many did. The impression left upon me by the incident, frequently strengthened by others since, especially during the South

African War, was that the country awaits an inspiration that will wipe out the sectional differences to which it is so prone, and unite it in a national cause. It is usual to assume that, were Holland attacked by any of its great neighbours, it could not long preserve itself against conquest. That is probably true, but the Power would set itself an impossible task, I am convinced, which attempted to keep it in subjection. A permanent army of occupation would be necessary to cope with the tenacious resistance the Dutch would offer. But volunteer for the defence of the colonies, of the Indies, of Java, of Batavia itself, that is another matter; and conscription for service in the East is out of the question.

The islands of the Indian Ocean, like everything else of value that the Dutch possess, are an inheritance from the golden time of the seventeenth century, and the material reality is gilded with some romance for the nation. It is well to remember this, for anyone who pursues the subject of the Dutch Indies farther enters upon a very unromantic region indeed. With generations of Dutchmen, interest in the colonies was a disinterested concern for dividends. The patricians of Amsterdam and other cities, who reaped their fortunes in the garden of the East, do not appear to have been subject to the odour, alluring, of its spices. Java had for very long no political significance. It was late of coming into the debates of the Chambers. The colonies remained until the middle of last century in the pocket of the sovereign, and his Minister continued the policy, autocratic and secret, and no doubt a safeguard against inter-city faction, pursued by the Company, which enabled it to sustain the highest credit in Europe for its paper at the moment when its treasury was empty.

On the other hand, since the country has demanded responsibility for the colonies, and shouldered it, home

influence at Batavia has far exceeded that at Simla. I have met Dutchmen who grudge British India this advantage; and it is possible that there has been in Netherland India too abrupt a reaction from the traditional view of the colonies, as a commercial venture, which lasted almost without a break from the beginning of the seventeenth century to the last decades of the nineteenth. The new attitude towards them, which is one of eagerness to make up to the native populations for past extortions, while most honourable, is also a little exaggerated by political zeal. So far as the foreigner can judge, it does not appear most usually in the classes which recruit the ranks of the colonists and the civil servants, and in the great mass of the people does not appear at all.

The strong links with the Indies are the men who go out to administer and develop them, and for all of these Java is not a home, but only a career. At nineteen, Koos leaves his father's house to be trained for the Indian Civil Service. Three years later he sails for Batavia. Letters come from him telling of his probationary work and of the aspirant-controleurship to which he has been posted; of his first impressions of the capital, of the novel scenes among the natives, inland beyond the Preanger, where his lot is now cast. He and his family correspond regularly, or at long intervals. To his old acquaintances, at any rate, it seems that the next thing they hear of him is that he has been made Controleur in the first class, and is returning home on leave. What, is it ten years since Koos went away? How time flies! He is home for twelve months, possibly extends his leave to eighteen; that means six added to the next decennial term of service. During that time he pays a round of visits among relations, renews acquaintanceships. His figure is familiar at the club. He visits

Paris, London, Berlin, perhaps Paris again. Then he sails.

This second parting, even that with his family possibly, is not so poignant as the first. Ten years of Java changes a man; his friends have found him different, just a little disappointing. The "whisky-soda" he substitutes for the local "peg" is a disconcerting symptom of his displacement. And for a man with ten years of the East behind him, Holland revisited takes on a different colour from that of his dreams. He is more than a little disillusioned. He finds it a little irksome. He is not sure that he is not pleased to have his work in the East to return to.

But, on the other hand, a second ten years of exile will mean, to him and to those he is leaving, greater changes than the first. He can hardly hope at the end of them to find the circle at home still unbroken. And the years, as a matter of fact, produce the revolutions anticipated. There are deaths, breaking up of households: the address of his parents drops out of his correspondence; there are marriages—he marries; and then, once more, Koos, who for some years now has been Assistant-Resident, is home again. Ought he to take the pension to which he is now entitled? There is an informal family council. Promotion is slow; he is lucky if a Resident's post is in the wind for him when he returns. But again pay is small, and the pension matches it, and the quarter of one's salary as Assistant-Resident is only £210 a year—not much to retire upon. If he does go out once more, it is only a few years until the Service knows Koos no more, and he slips in among the pensioners of Arnhem or Nymegen or the Hague, seeking the *Buitenzorg* (*Sans Souci*) at home best suited to his purse for spending his remaining years "away from sorrow and care."

Thus Java enters Holland in Europe in the persons of middle-aged gentlemen with a liver and the constitutions of sixty, which they assuage by playing ombre at the club. So it is with the soldiers, the merchants, the planters, the men in the professions, they all come back. Some of them do not return so soon as others, or so soon as they used to do. Fortunes are not so quickly made, and not so easily saved in these days. There are fortunate ones again who, returning early, do not go back, but leave younger hands to run the machine which keeps them at Hyde Park or at Nice. Only a few, caught by the enchantments of the East, elect to live out their lives amid the beauties of Djocjakarta or some refreshing height of the Preanger. Most, sooner or later, and whatever their estate, return, and for those at home their return punctuates the passage of time.

Sometimes it is their children who bring Java into the Dutch homes in Europe. They are not sent to Holland as a rule until they are eight or nine—too late an age, for their constitution and character, is a common opinion. They are put to the higher-burgher school or gymnasium, or to a boarding-school; the boys, if destined for the Indies, pass to Leyden or the college for agriculture and forestry at Wageningen. They live with relations meanwhile, or spend their holidays with them, and bring with them, from years of association with native servants, something exotic, in speech, in manner, in reminiscence, that disconcerts and makes anxious some uncle, still more some affectionate aunt.

Or again Koos, when he sailed after his first leave, left behind a fiancée, who is now going out to join him. There is excitement in two home circles. You think Janette is speeded as an affianced bride? You forget about the "marriage with the glove." Koos, in Soerabaya perhaps, but it may be in Menado, is represented by a

friend at the altar, and this substitute and Janette are wedded by regular ceremony, except that they join gloved hands. How secure a people it is! Janette sails to Batavia, under the protection of a ring and a husband's name. Koos need not fear the perils of flirtations on shipboard; they cannot ravish her from him. In lonely Menado as in hospitable Soerabaya she can join him, already her lord. And should, meantime, he have succumbed to any of the plagues of India—an extreme view of the case, but bridegrooms are mortal—for the bride the trousseau and the ticket to Batavia are not wholly loss.

And sometimes children bring into homes in Holland the very colour of Java. Koos, it may be (it often was so), like a servant of John Company, has taken to live with him a Njais or native housekeeper. He does not, or not often, marry this daughter of the East, who may be a daughter of princes, but frequently he sends their children home to be educated, and gives them his name. They return to Java to swell the society of the Eurasians, who are numbered with the Europeans; the girls marry in it, the boys enter the Government offices. Or, if he has retired, they may remain in Europe, and make their home with him. They continue to make it with him though he marries again, and little white children grow up to call them "broer" and "zuster." Such mixed households are not altogether rare. The appearance of these brown, black-haired, liquid-eyed children is taken for granted. They look out at you from the ranks of every boarding-school parade. They come in to play with your host's children. Their relationship is acknowledged, their position is assured. "My cousin Marie," says a fair daughter of Holland, introducing an olive-brown maid—daughter of what race?—who smiles out of almond-shaped eyes.

By and bye this little brown maid has made a good marriage. Her brother will have high rank in the army.

Thus the East comes into the blood of Holland. It comes partly through the Dutch policy of monopoly, which kept Java close as an oyster. It belongs partly to the Dutch method of colonising, which time in their case has justified, by which the Hollander absorbs something of Java in his exile, and East and West are not entirely twain. Well, changes are in the air. The oyster is opening. The Njais may go. And how to prevent some understanding of the native going with her?

Meanwhile the very newest generation of officials is going out to take its place in the machine. This younger Koos will follow the same track: aspirant-controleur, controleur (of classes), assistant-resident, resident (if he is lucky); £150 at twenty-four, £400 when he is thirty-four, twice £400 when he is forty-four, three times £400 or a little more if one of the two-score plums of the service is his. Perhaps the pay will be bettered. Perhaps, too, the interminable detail of office will slacken, perhaps the Secretariat will cease from so much troubling. But the languors of Java will creep into the blood also, sapping his vitality, and he too will return an old man who ought to be in his prime, to haunt the modest retirements of his predecessors, and sigh their sighs for the progress in State, when he was a great man under the golden umbrella. Yet he goes out with different ideals, and to find some different conditions.

His education is much the same as that of the men he is succeeding. The reader, I hope, possesses now some picture of the home he comes out of. It may be Puritan, it may be "free"; it is pretty certain to be simple, comfortable, of good custom. This Koos also

has been through a higher-burgher school with a five-years' course, and that completes his general education. It is only the comparatively few entering the Judicial Service (which is separate from the administrative; again the Dutch instinct for the expert peeps out) who receive the higher education. These pass from the gymnasium to the usual course of a student of Law at Leyden, where provision is made for preparing for the examination of the Faculties, the particular gateway to their service. For Koos, of the administrative branch, on the other hand, passing the final examination of the higher-burgher school is a qualification for Leyden (which now takes the place of Delft), and to Leyden he goes accordingly, his age eighteen or nineteen, but as a rule only to take out the necessary classes. For the next three years his studies there are directed exclusively towards achieving success in the "grand examination for officials." History, geography, ethnology, religious laws, institutions, and customs, political institutions of the Dutch Indies, the Javanese and Malay languages: that is the entirely practical curriculum. The examination is stiff, the competition is considerable. There are not always posts to go round the successful candidates; who can raise their marks and therefore their rank by passing an examination in other native languages as well.

The Dutch "Indian Civil," therefore, does not, like our own, enlist the flower of Academic youth; it rarely, in the administrative branch, enlists Academic youth at all. In any criticism passed upon the system on that account, it must be kept in mind that the education given at the higher-burgher school is uniformly more thorough than that at the corresponding schools among ourselves. We have, in fact, no schools exactly corresponding to it. Indeed, a comparison between the two Services is not possible without the knowledge, which

possibly no one possesses, of the duties of the *personnel* in each, and the conditions under which they are performed. With much in common, Dutch and British colonial administrations are in certain essential principles antipodal. This is especially true of their relations with native races. Circumstances have forced upon the ruling whites in Java an association with their brown subjects in the business of government that entails a putting off of the West and a putting on of the East. For this there is necessary a knowledge of native custom and native languages, which present-day Anglo-Indians notoriously neglect, and the tradition of Delft undoubtedly fosters.

On being selected for the service, Koos is presented by the Government with £33, 6s. 8d. for equipment, and a free passage to Batavia. There he will be at the disposal of the Governor-General in assisting to solve the problems of the native and the colonist which confront Holland in her Eastern islands. They also reflect the clash of ideals which we have been discovering in Holland at home.

In taking leave of this Dutch official in the East, facing the large issues which await solution there, we may regard him as coming closer than his countrymen at home to the chief interest of Holland, her fate as a pawn in world politics. Holland's part in that game is unique. No other peoples' is exactly like it. The Dutch have an Empire without the temptation to be Imperial. They are secured in their colonial possessions by no military power, but only through a moral sanction and the rivalries of their neighbours. In that position, with its opportunity for their traditional policy of "finding a way" in which long practice has made them skilled, there is no room for a censorious spirit towards others whose responsibilities are less happily pacific. Precarious

though it may be, it yet leaves them highly favoured among the nations. For no other possesses so much of the authority with so little of the responsibility and temptation of a Great Power. At home their conditions, as I have tried to show in these pages, enable the Dutch to approach the problems of the modern State in a singularly individual yet disinterested way. Whatever the future may hold, their present safety lies, they know, in the ideal voiced by their Queen, and faithfully pursued by many of them, as the stranger in their homes observes, of being great in all those things in which a small country can be great.

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